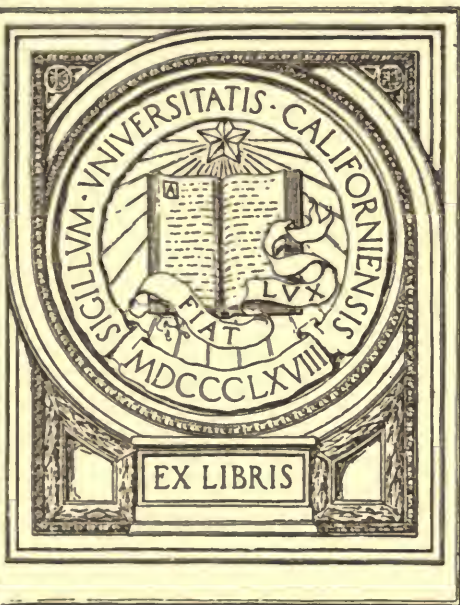




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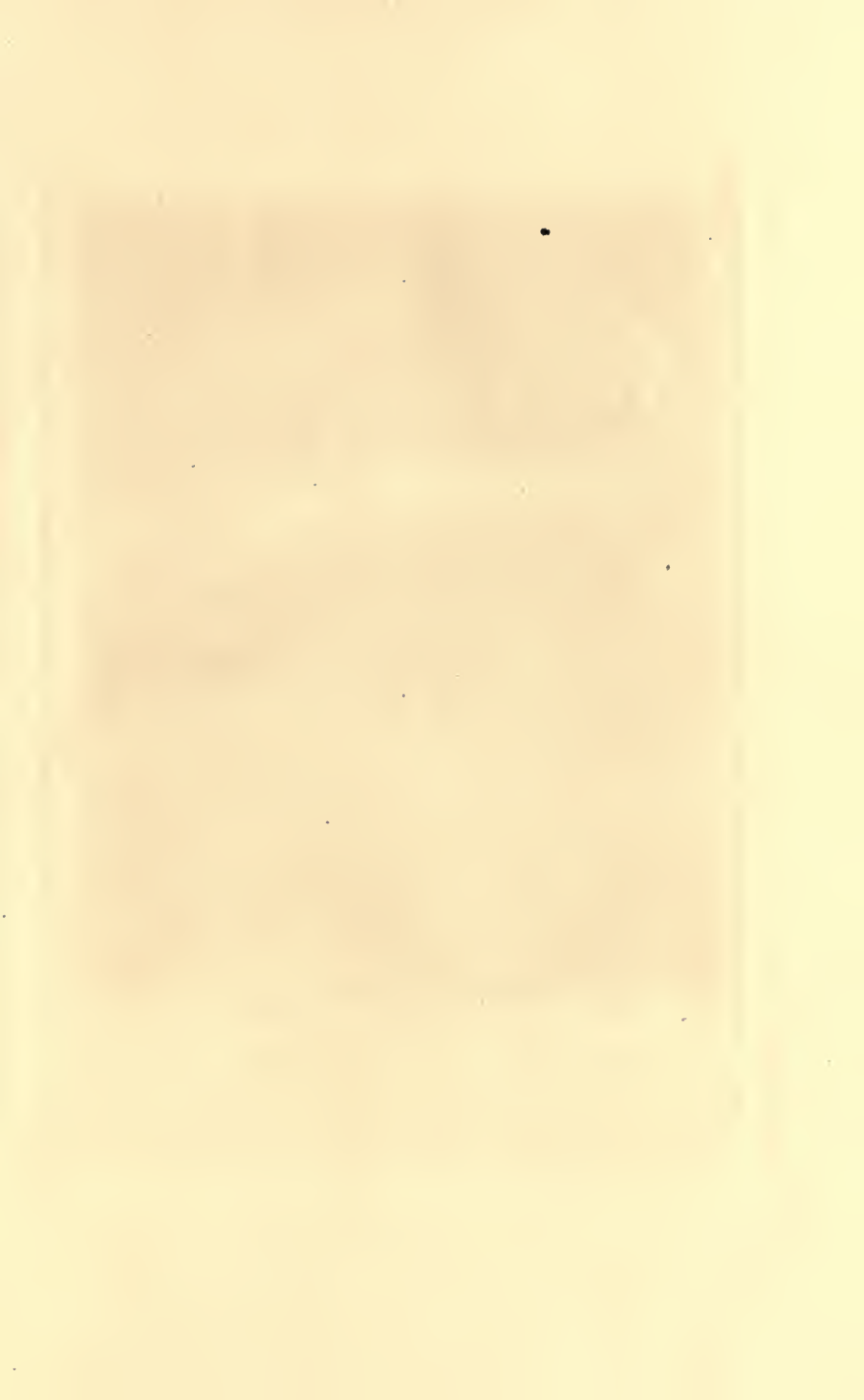
HENRY FOX, FIRST LORD HOLLAND

HIS FAMILY AND RELATIONS

VOLUME II



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HENRY FOX, FIRST LORD HOLLAND

HIS FAMILY AND RELATIONS

BY THE EARL OF ILCHESTER

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1920

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HENRY FOX, FIRST LORD HOLLAND

CHAPTER XVIII

As soon as Newcastle had obtained the King's permission to make overtures to Pitt, he instructed the Lord Chancellor to arrange an interview with him. The conversation between them took place on October 19, and lasted three hours and a half. Pitt's immediate answer was "an absolute final negative"; yet, relenting, he called two days later on Lady Yarmouth. To her he spoke plainly, as he had done to Hardwicke, of his antipathy to acting with Newcastle, but handed her a list of his proposals for filling the various offices. In it, Fox's name found no place.

"Mr Pitt has been sent for by Ld Chancellor, and *charte blanche* was offer'd him. He, like an honest man, desir'd to know the service expected before the price was talk'd of, and added that the D. of N. had so engross'd the King's confidence that nobody else could expect any share in it; refusing, as I understand, to come in on any acct whilst the D. of Newcastle was master of the court, even if the measures were chang'd to such as he could support. The Chancellor ask'd him if he would not take time to consider of it. He said, No, he was determin'd. Yesterday, he appear'd at Lady Yarmouth's and related to her all that had pass'd between him and the Chancellor, and desir'd that she would return his most humble thanks to H.M., for having condescended to think of him on any occasion.

"Hence it is suppos'd that he will treat, if measures can be made palatable; but that he will treat with the

King directly. I believe Munchausen will be sent to him."¹

Fox spoke of Pitt's terms as those of a madman : certainly they were unceremoniously rejected by the King. The exclusion of Fox's name led the Chancellor to change his opinion on one point. He had believed that Pitt's contrariness came from an agreement between them : now he suggested that the plan looked like concert with Leicester House.² On the 24th, he kept a further appointment with Pitt, but with no different result.

Newcastle was in despair ; and fruitlessly approached Halifax and Egmont to take office, with a view to bolster up his failing fortunes. He risked a further rebuff from Granville ; and even calculated the chances of buying Fox with the Paymastership,³ to which the latter's inclinations were believed to be tending. In his Grace's fevered imagination, every man's hand seemed against him. Resignation was at last his only resource, and he openly announced the fact on October 25.

On the 27th, therefore, Fox received a summons from Granville to attend the King. The meeting of Parliament had been postponed for a fortnight.

" As soon as he came in, His Majesty said, ' The Duke of Newcastle *whom you hate* will retire,' and, after Mr Fox had declared that he had no resentment against his Grace of Newcastle, he bid him speak to Mr Pitt, and see if they could agree upon measures for carrying on his affairs. His Majesty talk'd a good while to Mr Fox, and said he had doubts whether Mr Pitt would join with him. He then asked who Mr Fox would talk to about measures for carrying on his affairs, and upon his naming the Dukes of Devonshire, Bedford and Marlborough, together with all

¹ H. Fox to the Speaker, October 22, 1756.

² Hardwicke to Royston, October 21, 1756 (*Life of Hardwicke*, ii. 329).

³ H. Fox to Digby, October 25, 1756 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, viii. p. 221). " Newcastle would not go on with me, and now cannot go on without me," wrote Fox to Keene on November 9, 1756.

the considerable people who supported the Ministry last year, there ensued a great deal more conversation than can be here related, the conclusion of which was, to desire Mr Fox to speak to all the people he should think proper, and concert with them upon measures for carrying on his affairs. In this conversation the King asked Mr Fox many times what he would have, to which, as I understood, he always replied that he was ready to support His Majesty's Government in any capacity he should think proper; but that it was in vain to talk of places till they had agreed upon measures." ¹

Although Fox had, in effect, a commission to form a Ministry with or without Pitt, he had no illusions as to the probability of being successful in the latter contingency. "I will do anything to join Pitt," he wrote to Lord George Sackville, "and nothing more willingly than declining the station I shall be forced into if we do not join, for, as the King says, he must be served by somebody, and things must not be suffered to go into confusion if it can be avoided." ²

The first thing was to seek a personal interview. The opportunity soon came, at Savile House, on the following day, at the Prince of Wales's levee—the first which he had held since the formation of his new establishment. The rivals met at the head of the stairs, and were soon engaged in earnest conversation, which lasted full twenty minutes. "Mr Pitt exceeding grave, Mr Fox very warm. They did not seem to part amicably." ³ Neither of the two accounts preserved of the discussion credits Pitt with having shown an ordinary modicum of civility. ⁴ As soon as Fox had announced the terms of his mission, Pitt expressed his surprise at the selection of the messenger. He would have preferred, said he, to send a reply to His Majesty by some one entitled to his "confidence and

¹ H. Digby to Ilchester, October 28, 1756.

² October 28, 1756 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, ix. p. 10).

³ J. West to Newcastle, October 28, 1756 (Add. MSS. 32,868).

⁴ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 97; Glover's *Memoirs*, p. 90.

esteem." Clearly, no hope could be expected of assistance in that quarter.

Fox displayed no surprise at the ill success of his venture, nor did he blame Pitt for the refusal. "He foresaw, I suppose, that my place would be the Treasury," he wrote to Bedford. "I can't much blame him, my Lord; for in that case what would he be but Paymaster again under another Pelham, with an employment of a higher rank?"¹ But a phrase at the commencement of the same letter discloses the real crux of the situation. "Every word Pitt has said was in concert with Legge and Leicester House." Elated by the fawning advances of Newcastle and Hardwicke, Pitt at last felt strong enough to dictate his own terms.

Fox, however, was not to be daunted by one failure. The principal was adamant; but were his auxiliaries equally unapproachable? "There are persons of more consequence and in every respect preferable to Mr Pitt, I mean Lord Bute and Mr Legge," he wrote that same evening to the Duke of Argyll, whom he implored to come up to town. "I will wait on Lord Bute, I will write to Legge immediately."² To detach them would be to leave Pitt without sufficient support. A family Opposition might then become his sole resource.

The attempt was audacious, but for one short moment no effort was too bold for Fox. There was just a chance that Bute, who was certainly under an obligation to him for his new office, might possibly be induced to assist. Some conversation seems actually to have taken place between the two men³; but though Argyll, upon whose influence Fox was chiefly depending, replied from the country in favourable terms, he showed no eagerness to hurry to London. Indeed, his arrival only took place after the crisis was over.

¹ October 30, 1756 (*Bedford Corres.*, ii. 205).

² October 28, 1756 (Waller MSS.).

³ H. Digby to Sir C. Hanbury-Williams, November 10, 1756 (Stowe MSS. 263).

From Legge, his former friend, the negotiator received a serious rebuff. To a letter, conveyed by Lord Halifax, begging him to come to town, and offering "to pull at any oar, and act any part that the great and able men who must join from all sides on this occasion shall assign me,"¹ Fox received no reply. At his request, the paper was returned to him on November 9, but no adequate excuse was vouchsafed in the covering letter for the studied discourtesy.

Having thrown out these tentative suggestions, Fox hurried off the same evening to Windsor in order to report to the Duke of Cumberland. There he spent the night. On the following day, the Duke of Devonshire, who had been sent for to London, arrived, and was in his turn entrusted with the formation of a Ministry. The King's instructions were to see Pitt, who had actually proposed his Grace for the Treasury, and to make a further attempt to prevail on him to accept Fox as a colleague. But all was in vain. Pitt's pretensions, it is true, underwent some modification: yet with regard to the retiring Secretary of State his resolve was unalterable.

"Pitt is much more moderate and reasonable to-day, but still refuses to act with me a minister. I think it will end in his being Secretary of State; Legge, Chancellor of the Exchequer; I, Paymaster. Our friends in this room disapprove this much, but what is my choice? This, or being Prime Minister (which I may be) with Leicester House, Pitt, etc., opposing, the clamour of all England directed at me in my first year as much as at Sr Robt Walpole in his last or more; and the D. of Newcastle and Lord Chancellor, withdrawing from under me all the strength they furnish. Then the times, and fresh calamities happening every day."²

And now that Fox had realised that he could not be

¹ H. Fox to H. Legge, October 28, 1756. Walpole (*Memoirs*, ii. 99) states that the letter was written when Fox first thought of breaking with Newcastle. The date speaks for itself.

² H. Fox to Digby, October 30, 1756.

chief Minister with any reasonable hope of success, he began to turn his attention to thwarting Pitt. At least he would make it impossible for his more successful rival to seat himself too firmly in the seat of power. To this end he implored Devonshire to take the Treasury, and begged Bedford to fill the vacancy which would consequently occur in Ireland. Further, he sought to introduce certain of his adherents into minor offices in the Government—no difficult matter as it happened, for Pitt's relations and friends were insufficient in number to go round. A leavening of all parties was undeniably preferable in his eyes to a solid phalanx of the Grenvilles and their allies at Leicester House.

Thus it is that we find the names of several of Fox's clique in a list which he forwarded in confidence to Devonshire, in exchange for one of Pitt's drawing. He himself was entered as Paymaster ; and Lord Berkeley of Stratton as First Lord of the Treasury, presumably in case Devonshire insisted on some less responsible post. Lord Halifax was suggested for the Admiralty, Lord Temple for the Board of Trade.

Neither Devonshire nor Bedford was eager for the honours allotted to them. Both dined, by arrangement, with Fox on November 1, at the King's Head Inn, in Kensington. Marlborough and Rigby were also of the party. Devonshire, who came in late, condemned Pitt's impracticability and spoke of his own preference for Fox, but clearly demonstrated his leaning to some accommodation. He absolutely refused, however, to accept Legge as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Things remained in this "unpleasant situation," Bedford related, when he parted with Fox at half past one.¹

On the following day, Bedford went to court, at the instance of Fox, and was entertained by the King for a

¹ Bedford to Duchess of Bedford, November 2, 1756 (*Bedford Corres.*, ii. 207). The rendezvous at the King's Head was given for half-past three in the afternoon.

whole half-hour with bitter complaints of Pitt's conduct. He was succeeded in the closet by Granville, who produced a scheme of his own. This seems to have found immediate favour in the King's eyes. Offers were to be made to Pitt and his friends of such a nature, that, if they refused to accept them, they would be discredited for ever in the eyes of the public. Next, Fox was received in audience. Then it was perhaps that the King again pressed him to take the Administration into his hands. "I was never dishonest, rash or mad enough for half an hour to think of undertaking it." ¹ George had at last come to realise that Fox was not as black as he had been painted by Newcastle, and that he was not to blame for the Bute episode. Consequently, he had passed into favour. In Henry Digby's words, "He was as well with His Majesty an hour after the D. of Newcastle retired, as his Grace was a fortnight ago." Fox had done what he could throughout to buoy up the King's spirits. At worst, he once said, he would take the Treasury himself, and go to the Tower. "Ah," said the King, "if you go to the Tower, I shall not be long behind you."

Fox insisted throughout that Pitt's conditions would increase; and his prophecy was speedily verified. Devonshire, who saw the King later the same morning, had that moment received a letter containing extended demands. In consequence, his Grace, as he left the closet, gave Bedford orders from the King to remain in town for the present. He found him with Fox, listening to Granville's explanation of his new scheme, which speedily took concrete shape. Devonshire was to occupy the Treasury, Fox to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Pitt Secretary of State. Legge could be bought off with a peerage. Pitt's proposals were to be carefully considered by Devonshire and Fox, and their recommendations submitted to a meeting arranged to be held on the following evening. At Fox's suggestion, this gathering was to consist of

¹ "Narrative for Lord Kildare."

members of both Houses of Parliament in or near London, and the necessary summons was at once issued.

“There will be a great meeting to-morrow night of peers and members of the House of Commons, and it now seems as if it would be determined that the King should send to Mr Pitt and tell him that His Majesty is determined to have the nomination of his own Treasury himself. That he will appoint the D. of Devonshire first Commissioner of it, and Mr Fox Chancellor of the Excheqr; that the rest of Mr Pitt’s demands, unreasonable as they are, will be complied with. If Pitt should insist upon having Legge or any one of his own people Chancellr of Excheqr, that will not be complied with. If he only insists that Mr Fox shall not be there, Lord Dupplin or some insignificant person may be named, and Mr Fox be Paymaster; in which case he would be in a manner the King’s minister for the House of Commons. I think the whole of these treaties, when they are known, will do Mr Pitt no honour, for he has not shewn the least disposition to accommodate things for the good of the public, but seems rather determined to conquer than assist the King. This will not be submitted to.”¹

The above was written at 9 p.m. An hour later all was changed! Devonshire had announced his intention of refusing the Treasury!

Horace Walpole’s innate love of intrigue was responsible for this transformation, and possibly altered the whole course of subsequent events. Hearing by chance at Lord Hertford’s dinner-table of the meeting arranged for the evening of the 3rd, and of the proposals which were to be laid before it, he hastened to counteract what he considered a highly dangerous proceeding, and incidentally to disappoint “the views of that cabal.”² He hurriedly despatched his friend Conway to point out to Devonshire that once the scheme had been passed by the assembly

¹ H. Digby to Ilchester, November 2, 1756.

² Walpole’s *Memoirs*, ii, 103.

of notables it could not be withdrawn; that Pitt was most unlikely to accept so drastic an alteration of his terms; and that a breach would consequently be produced, which must be fraught with serious consequences to the state.¹

The timid Duke was easily induced to take the alarm. He hesitated in his resolve to become Minister, and cancelled the proposed meeting. Yet the long hours of the night brought renewed courage. Probably he had obtained some hint of an unexpected moderation on the part of Pitt.² Without a word to anyone he hurried to Kensington next morning, and instead of explaining his reasons for refusing the Treasury, accepted it, unconditionally, with Legge as his Chancellor of the Exchequer! Fox and Bedford, who were waiting in an outer room, were thunderstruck at the news; but the former, having seen Conway at Devonshire House on the evening before, was able, notwithstanding Devonshire's assurances, to guess the truth.

Fox shewed no resentment at his friend's vagaries. "Mr Fox seems very well *satisfied* with his Grace, but most of our friends think his behaviour was not very honourable towards Mr Fox. But as he attributes it all to his Grace's weakness and irresolution, he seems very well satisfied with him."³ His annoyance was to blaze forth later, when one of his friends seemed likely to be left in the lurch. To be minister at all, he must be "*the Prime Minister*," and this, Fox felt convinced, was, under all the circumstances, beyond his power.

¹ Walpole's insincerity becomes the more apparent, when we find a letter in his handwriting, dated less than a week before, expressing his hope that the belief, shared by the King, Lady Yarmouth and the Lord Chancellor, that Fox would not take the Treasury, was incorrect (H. Walpole to H. Fox, October 27, 1756).

² "A scheme was proposed to me to form an Administration with Fox and the Duke of Bedford. While this was in agitation Pitt became more reasonable, and I advised the King to close" (Devonshire's "Notes," *Torrens*, ii. 326).

³ H. Digby to Ilchester, November 6, 1756.

"If he took the Ministry into his hands, it was, to be sure, taking it in a violent storm, and for the next sessions sitting all day and every day in the House of Commons, so that it was impossible for him to have any leisure to attend to public affairs, which certainly require a great deal of attention at this time. And he certainly would have but little, if any, assistance either in or out of Parliament from any adjuncts he can get. Thus Mr Fox considers it, and upon this view he has determined to let an Administration be formed without him."¹

Paymaster Fox might have been, though even that offer was made in a niggardly spirit. "Mr Pitt thinks that would be too like Mr Pelham in the year 1742, and that I had better let G. Grenville have it, and be Treasurer of the Navy."² Even the suggestion, "to go into an employment inferior to Mr G. Grenville," rankled;³ and he preferred to remain without office.

"Pitt and Legge have each in different ways shew'd that they were as little inclin'd to act with me as with a gentleman, as they were to act with me as a minister. I have therefore refused to take the Pay Office or any employment. This too must be honest, whatever else it is; and the uniform part I shall act will be allowed to be of my own unbiass'd choice."⁴

Of the general arrangements, the retiring Secretary of State expressed approbation, tho' of a qualified nature. "I approve of it, since it is the only method of gaining peace and quiet for the session. Three months' domestic quiet are as necessary to the country as ever a night's sleep was to a man dying of a fever."⁵ Possibly in the depths of his heart was the feeling that his modest attitude might shew up well against Pitt's arrogant pretensions,

¹ H. Digby to Ilchester, November 6, 1756.

² H. Fox to Lord G. Sackville, November 4, 1756 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, ix; Stopford-Sackville Papers).

³ H. Fox to Devonshire (draft), November 1756.

⁴ H. Fox to J. Campbell, November 11, 1756.

⁵ H. Fox to Lord G. Sackville, November 4, 1756.

and that the fact would not be lost on King George. A low rate of interest for the present might produce a handsome premium at some more auspicious moment.

It was only upon questions of public urgency that Fox intended to proffer his assistance. On other occasions his efforts were to be calculated to act as a drag upon the plans of Pitt and his followers. To this end, he had engineered the inclusion of his friends in the Ministry, and was making superhuman efforts to overcome Bedford's unwillingness to accept the government of Ireland.

" I shall with great coolness and firmness, and therefore, I hope, with some dignity, support the publick measures, and make this session as quiet as may be. My honest system as to Administration is to keep the D. of Devonshire at the top of the high station he is placed in for the King's dignity, and as a bulwark, tho' I fear a weak one, between him and these insolent men ; and the better to effect this, I have us'd my earnest endeavours to get the D. of Bedford to be Ld Lt of Ireland. He is a strength to the Crown and his friends that will not be borne down by Pitt nor undermin'd by Legge, and may greatly assist the D. of Devonshire against the attempts of both. But whether he will accept it or no, I can't yet tell. Legge, assisted by Conway, I believe, and his own low arts, brought the D. of Devonshire so suddenly to accept with him what he refus'd to accept with me. And at this the D. of Bedford was so very angry, that he declar'd he would have nothing to do with this factious Administration, and went to Woburn, where I follow'd in about a week ; and as he has as good sense and as good a heart as man can have, my reasons, drawn from the use he may be of to the King and to the publick, made great impression." ¹

Fox had gone to Woburn on the 14th, accompanied by his nephew, Lord Digby.² On his return to town he acquainted Devonshire with the fact that he considered the result of the visit not unfavourable ; for, on the 18th,

¹ " Narrative for Lord Kildare."

² H. Digby to Ilchester, November 13, 1756.

we find the latter assuming that his Grace might still feel disposed to take the Lord-Lieutenancy, and in consequence consulting him on a measure which affected the forces in Ireland. Bedford's reply was evasive; and a further appeal was forwarded to him by Fox on the 20th. In it was expressed a strong desire from Cumberland, Devonshire, Gower and Granville that he should accept. Still he remained unconvinced, and put forward as an excuse his repugnance to take office while his friend remained out in the cold. "I fear it will be impossible for me to accept it, unless His Majesty can be prevailed upon to give you either some considerable employment, or, by a peerage to Lady Caroline Fox, such marks of his favour as shall take off the unjust proscription that has been laid on you by the new ministers." ¹ He was even willing to acquiesce in a suggestion that Lord Gower should take the Lieutenancy in his stead.²

But such was not Fox's view, nor did it suit him that any sacrifice should be made on his behalf. "If His Majesty's humour should still remain what it was when last spoke to on my subject, I should be ready to hang myself if the Duke of Bedford denied himself to the King and to the public on my account." ³ For ultimate success, however, he relied upon the ambitions of the Duchess and the persuasive eloquence of Rigby far more than upon his personal entreaties. Nor was he disappointed. By the 28th, the latter was able to write, "He is extremely dispos'd to take the part we wish him to do: indeed, I make no doubt but he has decided upon it." ⁴ A meeting was there and then arranged between Bedford and Fox at Rigby's house for December 1. There doubtless the matter was concluded, for his Grace, after some delay, kissed hands on December 14.

¹ Bedford to H. Fox, November 22, 1756. The printed authority for this episode is *Bedford Corres.*, ii. 215-22.

² R. Rigby to H. Fox, November 21, 1756.

³ H. Fox to Bedford, November 23, 1756 (*Bedford Corres.*, ii. 221).

⁴ R. Rigby to H. Fox, November 28, 1756.

In the course of this correspondence, Bedford had occasion to speak out on the subject of Fox's future position. One of the seats at Stockbridge had been rendered vacant by the appointment to the Admiralty Board of Dr Hay, a henchman of Pitt and Legge. The borough belonged to Sir Robert Henley, who had leased it in the spring to Fox for a period of ten years. Hay, though cognisant of the fact, made no direct application to Fox for his support. Intent, therefore, on annoying Pitt to the top of his bent, Fox decided to introduce one of his own friends, Lord Powerscourt, the owner of "a good estate" in Hampshire.

Pitt was furious, and publicly complained of the slight offered to his subaltern. Bedford, who had property in the locality, strongly advised Fox to abate his opposition. He felt convinced that capital would be made out of his friend's conduct, which would be condemned as detrimental to the best interests of his King and country. Fox put forward the excuse that his interest had never been sought. "If it had been ask'd of me as a favour, refusing to chuse Hays might shew ill humour. But, on the other side, to chuse him unask'd would have been meanness." He professed disagreement with Bedford's view, that open opposition on his part might throw Pitt and his friends back into the arms of Newcastle. In his opinion, he could do "more good by humbling, than harm by exasperating these gentlemen." ¹

"Lord Powerscourt's election is sure. Stockbridge is mine for ten years, if I live so long and this matter is over. Their repeated, superlative insolence, for I think their imagining I should be afraid is a fresh insolence, will not provoke me from the purpose of coolly and firmly supporting the King's measures, and your Grace at the head of them." ²

¹ Draft letter from H. Fox to Bedford, November 23, 1756; part of which apparently was not sent.

² H. Fox to Devonshire, November 23, 1756 (Devonshire MSS.).

This he wrote to Devonshire, who was also endeavouring to persuade him to modify his attitude. "I own," wrote his Grace in reply, "this affair of Stockbridge has and does give me great concern, as it tends to render any scheme I might have of making my situation tolerably comfortable more impracticable, and may in its consequences tend to throw us into still greater confusion."¹

And now Pitt added fuel to the flame by demanding the borough for Charles Townshend, who was also in need of a seat. "There is no station in life desirable, with such a submission to Mr Pitt as giving up Stockbridge now would be. Lord Powerscourt must be chose. . . . Your Grace will consider that I have been threatened, yet never desired to give up Stockbridge, and it is now too late. I hope the King will not be made to do what Pitt has not condescended to do, and ask it; because, my Lord, I should refuse it."² One thing he offered to do. He would arrange for Sloper to vacate his seat immediately in favour of Townshend or even Hay. "But this shall be yr compliment, not mine," he wrote to Devonshire. Powerscourt was returned on December 8, and Hay subsequently found a seat at Calne.

On November 6, Pitt accepted office,³ satisfied for the present to manage the Southern Department. The King refused to grant his wish to exchange or dismiss Holderness. Newcastle resigned on the 11th, Fox on the 13th, and Hardwicke six days later. Fox's demand for places had certainly been met in a fair and reasonable manner. Mr Edgecumbe, Lord Berkeley of Stratton, Lord Bateman and Sir Robert Henley had all received posts in the Government by his influence; Bedford was to go to Ireland, and Lord Hillsborough had been advanced in the peerage. But squeezed as Devonshire was

¹ Devonshire to H. Fox, November 26, 1756.

² H. Fox to Devonshire, November 25, 1756 (draft).

³ H. Walpole to Sir H. Mann, November 6, 1756 (*Letters*, iv. 10).

between the aspirations of his old friend and the claims of his new ally, his lot was not altogether a bed of roses.

At the very commencement Fox made the somewhat startling suggestion, that the embryo First Lord should at the last moment only accept office on condition that Lady Yarmouth could persuade the King to grant a peerage to Lady Caroline and her son.¹ This was putting friendship to a high test, but his Grace could not well refuse to broach the subject after his recent behaviour. Fox apparently thought that the King, for fear of losing Devonshire, might be induced to grant the request; whereas in the case of Bedford's recent stipulation there would have been no such inducement.² He followed up this opening with a letter to Lady Yarmouth, quoting instances of two peerages in one family, an objection which she had raised in conversation. "This dignity added to me would encrease my weight, as well as make me perfectly happy."³ A cynical admission! He was to profit in the Commons by an honour for his family in the other House. As such the King recognised it, and was correspondingly indignant. "He now wants to set his dirty shoe on my neck," he said to Grafton, abusing him "in very undignified terms." Fox had allowed greed to overcome his better judgment. He had anticipated the fitting occasion, in his eagerness to secure the price of his subserviency.

But this was not Fox's only disappointment. He had hoped to obtain the War Office for Ellis, and the Surveyorship of Woods for Charles Hamilton. In the former case, His Majesty preferred Lord Barrington; in the latter, refusal led to a temporary unpleasantness between Fox and Devonshire. The episode is of interest, both for the fresh instance which it furnishes of the extraordinary

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire, November 11, 1756 (*Torrens*, ii. 333).

² See *ante*, ii. 12.

³ H. Fox to Lady Yarmouth (undated draft).

pains taken by Fox to assist a friend, and also for the light which it throws upon the relations between him and his Grace at the time.

The Hon. Charles Hamilton was ninth son of James, sixth Earl of Abercorn. His knowledge of arboriculture and the science of gardening made him a peculiarly suitable candidate for the post in question.¹ Fox believed that he had obtained a promise from Devonshire that Hamilton should have the reversion of the post, when vacated by Mr Phillipson, whose health was so precarious that his death could be expected at any moment. The salary was to be made up to £1,200 a year, should it fall short of that sum. Understanding that the list of appointments had been submitted to the King, and that no objection had been raised, Fox wrote to Hamilton, on November 13, as if all was settled. Phillipson died on the 27th, and at once Pitt claimed the post for his brother, John, basing his claim on a previous agreement between himself and Newcastle.² Fox was furious when he heard what was happening. He seems specially to have set his heart on this place for his friend. "I told yr Grace, Mr Hamilton was dearest to me of any person in question."³ In reply Devonshire wrote that Pitt was very willing that something should be done for Hamilton, and that he had proposed the Board of Green Cloth. He suggested that this post, or a pension, would satisfy the claimant till something better could be found. But this did not appease Fox. "Consider, my Lord, everything that has pass'd, and do not drive me from you. I neither mean to do you harm, nor can do you harm if you should. But your Grace's own reflections will not please you when you do."⁴ Nor did a further explanation turn

¹ Walpole describes Painshill, his residence near Cobham, in a letter to George Montagu: "He has really made a fine place out of a most cursed hill" (August 11, 1748. *Letters*, ii. 332).

² *Torrens*, ii. 339.

³ H. Fox to Devonshire, November 30, 1756 (draft).

⁴ *Ibid.*, December 3, 1756 (draft).

away his wrath, though couched in most conciliatory terms :

“ Your letter has given me equal surprise and concern. I flattered myself that every action of my life ought to have convinced you of the sincerity of my friendship and regard for you ; and when you come to reflect coolly on the late transaction, I still hope that you will see my conduct in the light of one that wished to do everything in his power to serve you and make you easy. . . . Please recollect when you pressed me to take the employment, that I sent General Conway to Holland House to desire you not to press me ; and I gave it as one of my principal reasons that I was apprehensive that it might be the occasion of an interruption of that friendship which had subsisted so long, and which I valued so much. I fear my apprehensions were but too well founded. I can only say, that if you intend to leave me, I shall endeavour, in order to avoid unpleasant recollections to myself, that it shall be you that leave me, not I you.” ¹

Notwithstanding, Fox doubted the good faith of his friend, and in a momentary passion wrote that he considered the letter “ as full of insincerity and falsehood as a letter can be. . . . I hate him more than I do or think I ever did any man.” ² The slight to his protégé caused his inmost feelings to blaze out in a way which no affront to himself could occasion. But a dispassionate survey of the situation caused him to moderate his transports of rage, and ten days later he wrote, “ I saw the D. of Devonshire this morning. We are friends, and all that is past is to be bury’d in oblivion.” ³

Parliament met on December 2. Two days later Pitt kissed hands and received the seals, a ceremony which had been postponed, in order that he should not vacate his seat before the opening debate. The King’s Speech shewed unmistakable signs of a new master mind and

¹ Devonshire to H. Fox, December 4, 1756 (*Torrens*, ii. 340).

² H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, December 5, 1756.

³ *Ibid.*, Richmond House, December 16, 1756.

a new policy. A Militia Bill was foreshadowed, and the impending repatriation of the Hessians and Hanoverians was definitely announced. His Majesty might tolerate, but he could not welcome measures so alien to his policy in the past. The fact did not escape the notice of the public, and tended to diminish the belief in the stability of the Government. It is true that in the Lords an expression of thanks to the King for the services of the electoral troops was inserted, notwithstanding protests from Lord Temple, who had succeeded Anson as First Lord of the Admiralty. The general belief at the time was that Fox had surreptitiously prevailed on Devonshire to introduce the words, in order to create discord¹; but there is nothing to support the supposition. Pitt, however, flatly refused to accept any such adulatory phrases in the address of the Commons, and even threatened to throw up his appointment.

On the 5th, Fox left for the country. He had announced his intention of remaining away for some length of time.

“I went two days sooner than I intended to avoid expostulations, which Sr Wm Temple observes may do well between lovers, but never between friends. But my remaining out of town longer or less while shall be determined by the occasion there may be for my appearance in the House of Commons. Indeed I foresee none, and rather think my situation when I am there will be awkward, and therefore believe I shall stay 5 or 6 weeks.”²

But his holiday was destined to be of short duration. An express brought him hurrying back with Rigby from Bath early on the 12th, and scattered to the winds his plans for a peaceful month under his brother's roof.³

“He says he came back because he found that his friends blamed him for going, and he should have been

¹ H. Walpole to Sir H. Mann, December 8, 1756 (*Letters*, iv. 20).

² H. Fox to H. Walpole, December 5, 1756 (Waller MSS.).

³ *Letters of Lord Chesterfield*, iv. 202.

thought obstinate if he had not come back, though he sees no good in it ; and that he will go again as soon as they give him leave.”¹

On the 13th, he was in his place in the House of Commons. The question of quartering the Hessians was under discussion ; and the whole subject of the retention of the foreign troops in the country was again revived.

“ We in the H. of Commons were not permitted to thank, and I believe never did men do themselves so much violence as in being quiet on this head. Had there been a division that day or yesterday, when the foreign troops were said by yr friend Legge to be unpopular and that they were to go away immediately, the ministers and Torys would have been on one side and the whole House besides on the other. It was as much mark’d yesterday as a division could have mark’d it, when the whole house applauded me, Ld G. Sackville and Mr Conway, when we conjur’d them not, out of false notions of popularity, to send away the foreign troops till they knew how to supply so great a deduction from our defence ; and the applause given by the Torys only to Legge and Grenville.”²

Pitt was not present, being confined to his house, after the opening day, with the gout. The dismissal of the Hessians came up again upon the Army Estimates on December 22 ; and at Fox’s suggestion a call was moved for January 20, in order that nothing might be done without the full knowledge of the House.³ He still prided himself that he had a majority, “ who only forbear dividing out of regard to public tranquillity.”⁴

The outstanding feature of these debates was the certain

¹ H. Digby to Digby, December 14, 1756 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, viii. App. p. 223).

² H. Fox to J. Campbell, December 14, 1756.

³ H. Digby to Digby, December 23, 1756 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, viii. App. p. 223).

⁴ H. Fox to Sir C. Hanbury-Williams, December 26, 1756 (Phillips MSS.).

evidence that Pitt had come to some understanding with the Tory party. Fox looked on this as weakness rather than strength, and even began to believe that the Ministry would not last. Such an alliance must have its drawbacks. It would find no favour in the King's eyes ; and could not possibly appeal to Legge, " the child of the Whigs," as he had called himself.¹ Besides the Tories were not altogether unanimous. Their leader, Beckford, spoke in complimentary terms of Fox, though without authority.² He had further " grossly abused " Newcastle, and thus delighted Fox, whose haunting fear was a reconciliation between Pitt and the late chief Minister. The latter had sent Hardwicke to the new Secretary early in December, and had elicited a statement that he would never join with Fox. This was common ground, for the Newcastles only refrained from announcing the same resolve, from the fear of being pushed back into alliance with him by " enquiries and censures."³

But on this last all-important point Pitt was able to put Hardwicke's mind completely at rest. No sort of Enquiry on the conduct of the late Administration took place during his tenure of office. The Tories and George Townshend, the prime instigator of such measures, were in full agreement that it would be unwise to run any risks of forcing the timorous Newcastle back into Fox's arms. The motion was constantly postponed, nominally on account of Pitt's health, and when at last Townshend could no longer decently defer the subject, he called " with great coldness " for papers which related solely to the loss of Minorca.⁴ He therefore strongly deprecated his younger brother's attack upon Alderman Baker's contract for furnishing supplies to the troops in America, on the day previous to his motion. The immediate result had

¹ H. Fox to J. Campbell, December 14, 1756.

² *Memoirs of Lyttelton* (Phillimore), ii. 542.

³ Hardwicke to Newcastle, December 6, 1756 (Add. MSS. 32,869).

⁴ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 133.

been a confabulation between Fox and Newcastle. The former, though not in the best of health and in deep anxiety for his youngest son, who was dangerously ill, had gone to the House, upon the rumour, as he took the opportunity of explaining in his speech, of "the long-expected and long-wished-for enquiry" being to come on. He defended Baker, who completely vindicated his conduct, in one of his best speeches, and "met with universal applause."¹

¹ R. Rigby to Bedford, February 7, 1757 (*Bedford Corres.*, ii. 235).

CHAPTER XIX

THE disadvantages under which the Government laboured were numerous. Pitt was ill throughout the month of January, and on his rare appearances at the Cabinet Council shewed himself "haughty and visionary." Devonshire, too weak to keep order in a body composed of such diverse elements, was himself passing on secrets to Fox.¹ Halifax and Holderness were neither of them wholly to be trusted.² The King's dislike for Pitt and Temple was also an important factor in the situation: and under all the circumstances it seemed improbable that the life of the Ministry was likely to be of long duration.

Before Pitt was able to make his reappearance in the House of Commons, two of his favourite projects had been introduced and discussed. The raising of two Highland regiments was no new scheme. It had been brought forward early in 1756, when the need of troops for America was urgent, and when new enlistments were difficult to obtain. The proposal had the approval of Cumberland, and to some degree of Newcastle, but no one had had the actual courage to put into effect so daring an experiment. It remained for Pitt to develop the suggestion in an even bolder form. By Argyll's advice he selected, as colonels, a son of Simon, Lord Lovat, who had been beheaded, and a brother of Lord Eglinton, another prominent rebel in 1745. This step went too far for the Duke, and criticisms were raised in Parliament. Fox

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 116.

² Williams's *Life of William Pitt*, i. 307.

seems to have spoken in favour of the measure ; out of deference, Walpole insinuates, to Argyll.¹ Its success was irrefutable ; and a new area was thus thrown open for recruiting, whence some of the best of our British fighting material has since been drawn.

The Militia Bill was reintroduced in December by George Townshend, in the same guise as that which had been rejected by the Lords during the previous session. In the discussion which took place at the second reading, on January 26, Conway produced an alternative proposition, throwing the onus of finding men upon the great towns rather than upon the country districts. This, Fox supported, suggesting that some alteration in the bill would improve its chance of being accepted by the other House. Conway, however, withdrew his scheme in Committee, although he still maintained its superiority to that of Townshend, which was modified and sent to the Upper House.² The bill there received further substantial alteration, and passed into law in June.

On February 17, Pitt made his first appearance in the House of Commons as Secretary of State. " It could not fail of being remarked," says Walpole, " that he dated his administration with a demand of money for Hanover." He presented a message from the King, desiring a grant for the Electoral Dominions and support for the King of Prussia. On the next day, he disclosed a request for £200,000 to support an army of observation, in order to carry out the engagements which the previous Government had undertaken by the terms of the Convention of Westminster.

The apparent inconsistency of Pitt's conduct upon this occasion crumbles away, if the facts are closely examined. He had always strenuously combated the subordination of British interests to those of Hanover. But in this case it was necessary to maintain the balance of European

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 130 : Glover's *Memoirs*, p. 111.

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 132, 145.

power for the sake of Great Britain ; and as the danger to which Hanover was exposed was due to English operations against France, it was clearly a national duty to afford protection for the Dependency.

Pitt was seconded by Lord George Sackville, who in this debate definitely marked his desertion of Fox and his enlistment under the rival standard.¹ No opposition was raised to the demand. It passed without a single adverse vote. But the occasion for a sly dig at the new Secretary was too promising an opportunity to be lost. He would never provoke altercations, said Fox, nor would he decline them. "It was sufficient to him that his part had been a *consistent* one." He reminded Pitt of his taunts on the occasion of the German treaties. "He had been told that the German measures of last year would be a millstone about the neck of the minister : he hoped *this German* measure would be an ornament about the minister's neck." To this Pitt replied, that Fox's reflections were "but an ugly presage of his kind wishes to the new Administration" ; and repudiated all claim for himself to that high-sounding title of minister.

The most important debates of the session arose out of Byng's trial. The unfortunate admiral had been kept in custody since the end of July. At last, on December 27, a court-martial assembled at Portsmouth to try the case, which for months had been freely discussed by every English fireside. The public had no lack of literature to enable them to arrive at conclusions, and the general trend of popular feeling was strongly opposed to the

¹ Walpole relates that the change was due to the failure of certain negotiations in Ireland between the Primate, whose intimate friend Sackville was, and the Duke of Bedford. In these Fox was believed to have been deeply involved. He remarks too that Sackville had recently commenced to see more promise of stability in Pitt's conduct and measures.

Sackville also hated Conway ; and Fox's apparent connection in the Militia debate with the latter, to whose step-daughter Richmond was engaged to be married, was a further reason for this sudden resolve.

prisoner.¹ The trial dragged on till January 20. Even then the court took nine days to arrive at a decision. Difficulties had arisen upon the interpretation of the twelfth article of war. This, upon enquiry, the members were forbidden by the Admiralty to mitigate. As Byng was adjudged not to have done his utmost to take and destroy the French fleet or to relieve the garrison of St. Philip his offence came under that section, which, by an alteration made some three years before, left the court no option but to condemn him to death. In the belief, however, that his misconduct arose neither from cowardice nor disaffection, they earnestly recommended him as a proper subject for mercy.

The severity of the sentence seemed to ensure remission, for the wording of the representation to the Admiralty could not but prove that in the opinion of the court the punishment was too harsh for the crime. But those of Byng's supporters who flattered themselves with this thought lost sight of the fact that this was no ordinary *cause célèbre*. It was a trial of strength between the old Ministry and the new. Unfortunately for the admiral, the King was in close sympathy with his former advisers. Besides, in answer to a petition from the City, His Majesty had pledged his word that the guilty should expiate the loss of Minorca, and behind this he took shelter; though he could doubtless have evaded his promise, had he so wished. Fox represented the attitude which the King was adopting in an uncompromising light.

"Don't flatter yourself, dear Madam, as you have hitherto done. Adml Bing is not safe. The King will not pardon; nor do's the House of Commons wish he should, unless some reasons are given to show Bing's innocence. Whether there is inclination or power in his

¹ Byng's mutilated letter was published in the *Gazette*. He and his friends had put forward a *Vindication*, which was answered in due course, at Hardwicke's bidding, by David Mallet in a pamphlet entitled *A Plain Man on the Loss of Minorca*.

ministers to give him such reasons I doubt. H.M. will not pardon merely at the desire and representation of the court-martial." ¹

This mention of the House of Commons brings us back to the party aspect of the case. With an Enquiry pending on their conduct, the previous Ministry could not but hope for some definite result to the trial. The public looked for a scapegoat. Byng had been found guilty by a court composed of his own comrades-at-arms, and had received a sentence strictly in accordance with statute. Unless some new evidence could be adduced, it was held by Newcastle and Hardwicke that the law should take its course. Their view was strengthened by the pronouncement of the twelve judges to whom the sentence was referred by the King. They upheld its legality, which in certain quarters had been called in question.

To some extent Fox's sentiments were those of his former colleagues. It is impossible to absolve him from a prepossession against Byng, notwithstanding his asseverations to the contrary.² His belief in the fairness of the trial and the technical guilt of the prisoner outweighed his humanity. With all his good nature and his kindly feelings to mankind in general, there was certainly a latent vein of cruelty in his nature, which on rare occasions forced an outlet. We have seen it in the case against Alexander Murray ; we shall see it again in a subsequent reign. His inclinations were thrown into strong relief throughout the early debates, in which the opinion of the lawyers was brought forward as decisive argument. Fox raised no protest ; though he had not always been so complacent in the past to legal authority. Yet, on the other hand, as Secretary-at-War, he possessed an exceptional knowledge of the inner working of courts-martial, and seems to have been genuinely impressed

¹ H. Fox to Lady Hervey, February 23, 1757.

² See *ante*, i. 334, etc.

with the fact that the principle was now at stake. Hence his subsequent fears about the bill to absolve members from their oath. Once permit this alteration, and the whole principle was changed. The King would no longer possess the sole prerogative of mercy.

When the decision of the judges was received at the Admiralty, the board, with one exception, signed the sentence, and appointed February 28 as the date for the execution. On the following day (February 17), the matter was brought up in the House of Commons for the first time. Byng was a member of the House, and upon the notification of his sentence the Speaker produced precedents to justify his expulsion. This course, it was thought, might adversely prejudice the admiral's chance of reprieve; and it was not adopted. Sir Francis Dashwood's subsequent motion for the production of the recommendation of the court-martial was indifferently received, and was swept aside by Fox's call for the order of the day.

The feature of the debate upon a further motion by Dashwood, a week later, for the consideration of the twelfth article, was Pitt's declaration of his sentiments and motives. To this he was forced by Mr John Campbell, of Cawdor, an intimate friend of Fox, whose genuine devotion to Lord Orford he shared; and by Fox himself. Pitt had up to that date carefully avoided any definite pronouncement. He feared to offend the King, and to alienate the good-will of the public, by a show of tenderness and compassion towards Byng, feelings which undoubtedly were uppermost in his breast. But now, despite a storm of threatening letters, he spoke out, and thereby incurred a transient unpopularity. Mercy he would like to see, he said, but that was solely the King's prerogative. It did not rest with the legislature to advise on this point. Nor did he think that the Lords of the Admiralty were the right persons to make such representations (referring of course to His Majesty's dislike of Temple), as Campbell

and Fox suggested they should do, if they were really convinced that the finding of the court simply implied *an error of judgment*; and that consequently an act of injustice was in the making. "For his part, he thought more good would accrue to the discipline of the navy and the good of the service from mercy in this case than the strictest justice."¹

Having burnt his boats, Pitt adopted a less vacillating attitude, and laboured openly to secure Byng's safety. Neither he nor Temple was successful in their appeals to the King for mercy on the following day. But on the 25th, three members of the court-martial, who had already approached Temple with an appeal for clemency, desired George Grenville at the Admiralty to apply to the House of Commons to relieve them from their oath of secrecy. Grenville refused, and as Keppel, one of the three and himself a member of Parliament, could not be persuaded through diffidence to bring forward the motion, Horace Walpole asked Fox to do so. The latter temporised, and finally left the House. Dashwood, however, was at hand to step into the breach, and after Keppel had informed the House, in answer to an appeal from Pitt, that he and some other members of the court-martial were uneasy in their minds, and wished to be at liberty to speak before the sentence which they had passed was carried into execution, the point was fully debated. No action was taken, but the general disposition of the House seemed to be to grant an Act of Parliament to release them from their oath, should they not think themselves at liberty to speak without it.

This was Friday, and as the execution was fixed for Monday, the House arranged to sit on Saturday. At a Cabinet held that morning it was recommended that Byng should be reprieved for a fortnight; and in the afternoon Pitt brought down a message to the effect that the King

¹ H. Digby to Ilchester, March 1, 1757. Mr Digby was member for Ludgershall, in Wiltshire,

had granted the temporary respite, having been informed "that a member of that House, in his place" had declared that he had something of weight to say. Exception had been taken to these words at the Council meeting, but Pitt had brushed the complaint lightly aside.

Fox had full information of what had transpired from Bedford, and came down to the House eager to make capital out of Pitt's indiscretion.

"As soon as it was presented, Mr Fox said he was astonished to hear in the King's message any notice taken of what a member of Parliament had said in his place in the House of Commons; that he thought it a very dangerous precedent, but that he hoped he should hear some one justify it later than the days of Q. Elizabeth or King James ye 1st. Mr Pitt was obliged to say he knew of none, but that he thought it necessary upon this great and difficult occasion¹; that he was not one of those, who, upon intricate questions, meanly and basely ran away and hid himself: alluding to Mr Fox's absence the day before. Mr Fox took no notice of this then, but said he would justify himself afterwards. After this the Speaker stood up, and talked a great deal about the message; commended Mr Fox for taking notice of it, and then said he thought it extremely wrong, that it was a breach of privilege, and that it must be taken notice of in the Journals. After this Commodore Keppel declared that he and the other members of the court-martial did not think themselves at liberty to speak without an Act of Parliament. Upon this Mr Potter moved for leave to bring in a bill for that purpose. This, after a long debate, was carried without a division. Mr Fox made a very fine speech upon the danger of such a bill, tho' he did not directly oppose it."²

Fox's objections, over and above those which we have already cited, were that he wished to see more adequate

¹ Pitt made a strong point of the time being too short to consult precedents, while the life of a fellow creature was in danger (Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 158, which is the published authority for these debates).

² H. Digby to Ilchester, March 1, 1757.

grounds for a bill so unprecedented. It had taken the members of the court three weeks to discover their scruples. Feelings sometimes operated on reason : they certainly did in his case. To Pitt's taunt that " he should have been ashamed to run away basely and timidly, and hide his head, as if he had murdered somebody under a hedge," Fox replied that he had run away from his judgment. " Mr Keppel had told him what he meant to do. He did not think himself necessary to every council, and had foreseen what confusion would follow. He *had* gone away, his compassion struggling with his reason. On consideration, he had returned like a man to the hard part." ¹ At the same sitting the bill passed first and second reading and the Committee stage.

The final debate, on February 28, opened inauspiciously for Byng's sympathisers. Keppel was forced to allow, in answer to his questioners, that two out of the four supporters whom he had named on Saturday had gone back upon their word. But here Fox came to the rescue. If even three of the court, he said, would sign a petition saying that they had something to tell material for the King's information, he would raise no further objection ; and later in the debate he accepted Keppel's single assurance that his " desire for being at liberty " did imply " something great." " I am satisfied," he said. " Afterwards I shall propose means to prevent such bills for the future." The bill passed, though many members, and among them Fox, left the House before the question was put.

It must be noted that during the afternoon Charles Townshend signified his adherence to Fox's views, and congratulated the House " on obtaining these grounds for their proceedings by Mr Fox's means"—much to the annoyance of his brother and of Pitt. Indeed, Fox was complimented by the latter on his new adherent, and in

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 162.

his reply found fresh opportunity for some caustic references to the inconsistencies of his rival.

We can now pass shortly over the final scenes of the drama, which was transferred to the Upper House. Two questions were there put on oath to each member of the court-martial. They were asked whether they knew of any matter that passed previous to the sentence, which might show, (1) that the sentence was unjust; (2) that the sentence might have been given through any undue practice or motive. As every reply, even that of Keppel, was in the negative, it appeared to the House that the Commons had been influenced by a feeling of humanity towards the admiral rather than by the conviction that an error of justice was being committed. The reason for the bill, therefore, seemed to disappear, and it failed to pass the second reading. Byng met his fate on the appointed day with fortitude and courage.

The oft-postponed Enquiry followed in due course on April 19, limited, as we have seen, to an examination of the measures taken with regard to Minorca. Pitt had by that time fallen from office, and so lukewarm were the Government that it was due to Fox's own initiative that a date was fixed at all for dealing with the subject by a Committee of the whole House. Fox's move was "evidently throwing it into contempt,"¹ and the proceedings, which lasted six days till past midnight, developed into a dull and "very fatiguing" farce.² Voluminous masses of letters and papers, read for hours together by the Clerk, had the effect of emptying the House: and the subsequent discussions were hardly more enlightening. Fox recounted the proceedings of one day, which were characteristic of the whole.

"There is no giving an account of our debate; settling method of proceeding and the order of questions (in which we were much hampered) took up a great deal of time.

¹ Dodington's *Diary*, p. 394.

² Walpole's *Letters*, iv. 50.

At last, to the first of the inclos'd questions, Lord Strange mov'd an amendment, by leaving out the words mark'd. The division was 267 to 141. We went on ; pass'd (with debate, but without division) the next, and then two questions of Townshend's about Minorca, and adjourn'd at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 1. Pitt was gentle and civil to politeness. Nobody had been corrupt or ill-intention'd during the period in which Minorca was lost. Affairs had not been wisely administered ; *had been weakly administer'd during the period*, was his roughest expression." ¹

The whole burden of the attack fell upon George Townshend and the Tories. Charles Townshend was far less bitter than was his wont. Pitt was present in invalid's garb—the victim of his usual ailment. He maintained throughout the moderate tone to which he had pledged himself in conversation with Hardwicke.¹ It would have been folly on his part, in his present position, to bare old sores. The loss of Minorca he ascribed to the Government as a whole, not to individuals ; and his attitude augmented the difficulties of those who were really anxious to press home the charges. Fox found little need for intervening in the debates. His share was limited to an occasional word on some disputed point, or a few short sentences in defence of a colleague. Fifteen resolutions were passed by the House. Upon the most important of the series, the one which affirmed the impossibility of sending any stronger force to the Mediterranean than that which had been employed, the court majority sank to 78. By this alone were that party deterred from actually pressing for a vote of confidence, which they had contemplated. "To their great astonishment the late Cabinet is not thanked parliamentarily for having lost Minorca," was Walpole's ironical summing up of the situation.

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire, "Tuesday," April [26], 1757 (Devonshire MSS.). See also H. Fox to Devonshire, "12 o'clock at night," April 26 (partly printed, *Torrens*, ii. 375).

² See *ante*, ii. 20.

The conclusion of these debates cleared the way for the formation of a new Ministry, or at least for the apportionment of the important offices which had fallen vacant early in April. To the circumstances which led up to that crisis, we must now revert.

The King had never been able to feel himself at home with his new advisers. As early as the beginning of January, Hardwicke spoke of "His Majesty's scheme," which he was convinced was to get his Supplies under the new ministers, and then perhaps "throw all in" to Fox, either in conjunction with the Newcastle party or to their exclusion.¹ Indeed, from a conversation between Fox and Hume-Campbell at the New Year, which the latter subsequently related to Newcastle, it appeared that Fox had informed the King that "there should neither be wanting expedients or courage to support his affairs," whenever the proper time should arrive.² Fox dropped no hint of any desire for a fresh alliance with Newcastle, who was torn by conflicting emotions. The latter longed for return to power, but feared to face the dangers and difficulties which were bound to follow in its train. On the whole, he and his connections leant to an accommodation with Pitt, who had been studiously careful to avoid any serious breach with the former Ministry. Fox, on the other hand, they blamed, for having brought about their downfall; and their feelings were further embittered by the attacks which they believed were being instigated against them by him in a new periodical publication, entitled *The Test*.

It is not easy to judge upon available evidence how closely Fox was connected with this weekly accumulation of virulence and vitriol. He denied any particular knowledge of the identity of the author. "As to the Testes, I really don't know who writes them," he remarked in a letter to Hanbury-Williams, "but he has wit, and

¹ Hardwicke to Newcastle, January 7, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,870).

² Newcastle to Hardwicke, January 4, 1757 (*ibid.*).

I am told by one who, I believe, guesses, that he is a young man of no note, unused to writing, that he has taken a fancy to me, and is angry with Pitt for refusing in any shape to join me.”¹

It is impossible to believe that Fox had any personal share in the production, for the policy of indiscriminate violence generally adopted in its pages could hardly have commended itself to his better judgment. Friend and foe alike were assailed, and he, almost alone, was spared. He repeated the disclaimer in similar language to Mr John Campbell and Lady Hervey. Yet to the latter he allowed that he was able to influence the plan of the paper. He told her that he had conveyed, through a third person, his dislike of the manner in which he had been mentioned in the first two numbers, and that his communication had temporarily produced the desired effect.² Almost at the same time, too, we find him suggesting to Hanbury-Williams that he should employ his leisure in writing “a Teste or two” for him.³ The Ambassador promised to attempt the task,⁴ but subsequently confessed that his isolation in Russia was not conducive to a satisfactory result. “I have endeavoured to comply with your desires by sending you some papers for the press, but indeed after working hard I can produce nothing worthy of your reading.”⁵

The fact that these essays were apparently intended for publication seems to prove that Fox’s want of knowledge must have been of a purely voluntary nature. And further, certain evidence collected by Hardwicke for Newcastle, which the latter hurriedly passed on to the

¹ H. Fox to Sir C. Hanbury-Williams, December 26, 1756 (Stowe MSS. 263). Arthur Murphy, an actor and playwright, and Dr Francis were generally reputed to be the joint authors. Dodington’s name was also mentioned; and Fox quoted a rumour, which made him laugh heartily, that his brother was the writer.

² H. Fox to Lady Hervey, December 30, 1756.

³ December 26 (Stowe MSS. 263).

⁴ Sir C. Hanbury-Williams to H. Fox, February 15, 1757.

⁵ *Ibid.*, April 26, 1757.

King,¹ tells against him. The Chancellor's researches disclosed the fact that the written copy of the paper was carried every Friday morning from Mr Calcraft's house, by Taylor, a silversmith and protégé of Fox, to his own in Cecil Street, Strand. Thence Taylor's clerk took it to Hooper, the publisher, who passed it on to Parker, the printer, near Bishopsgate.² Clearly Fox had not far to go, had he desired at any time to satisfy his curiosity on the subject.

In the course of the month of February the King unburdened himself of his woes to Lord Waldegrave, in a long conversation, and instructed him to sound Newcastle upon his willingness to aid in turning Pitt and Temple out of office. We have already seen the dislike which His Majesty affected towards the two men. Temple was the real stumbling-block to an accommodation. "He was disagreeable," said the King, "sometimes insolent and totally ignorant of the business of his office."³ Had Pitt been alone, he might in time have overcome the monarch's prejudices. Besides, the state of his health was a serious drawback: in four months he had only been able to attend six audiences. His position was therefore precarious. To quote his own words, he was "a nominal minister without a grain of power."⁴ His enemies seemed to Chesterfield as many in number as those of the King of Prussia⁵; and his popularity had declined in consequence of his attitude towards Admiral Byng. Indeed, Pitt's first attempt at statecraft cannot be said to have proved an unqualified success.

Newcastle was as usual irresolute. He commenced by pointing out the difficulties of any change before the conclusion of the Enquiry. Upon this point Waldegrave

¹ Newcastle to Sir T. Robinson, December 27, 1756 (Add. MSS. 32,869).

² Add. MSS. 35,416.

³ Waldegrave's *Memoirs*, p. 95.

⁴ Glover's *Memoirs*, p. 111.

⁵ *Letters of Lord Chesterfield*, iv. 204

was in sympathy with him, but the reply did not satisfy His Majesty, who would brook no delay. Waldegrave therefore received instructions to talk to Cumberland and Fox, and at the same time to make further representations to his Grace. Fox wasted no time in preparing a scheme, the original outlines of which are best explained in a letter which he forwarded to his brother on March 4.

“ I have been sent to, to know whether I would not act with the D. of Newcastle to rescue H.M. and order'd to draw out a scheme of a new Administration upon that foot. Were I to be in the Administration, the D. of Newcastle cannot alter his nature, and in two months it would be the same case as in November last. My project avoids this; it is a new part which I have assign'd to myself, but it is one that I feel I could act well. I propose that the D. of Newcastle should be minister for England, the D. of Bedford for Ireland, the Duke of Argyll for Scotland, professedly and independently. The D. of Devonshire, who will not remain Minister (if he would, it were best of all), will be Master of the Horse again. I will have some security either by peerage to Lady Caroline, or pension or reversion, against the next reign, and be Paymaster in this. The management of the members of the House of Commons, and the distribution of favours shall be entirely in the D. of Newcastle; the management of debates in me. I wish'd Lord George Sackville might be Secretary of State, but he has foolishly gone to Pitt. However I still would offer it, and believe he would accept it. I would have Chs Townshend, who has left his brother and Pitt, Secr.-at-War. I would have Lord Halifax First Lord of Admiralty, and Lord Egmont or Lord Dupplin 1st Lord of Trade. I would have Dupplin or Barrington Chr of the Exchequer, and what I wish to be done for my friends, I would have done now, that, having nothing to ask, there may not be a possibility of quarrel. Now H.M. has sent to the D. of N.; and I am going to Lord Waldegrave to receive a like message, which I understand is this, that H.M. requires us either to meet or to negotiate through Lord Waldegrave, which we like best, to fix a



CAROLINE LADY HOLLAND.
By Sir J. Reynolds.

new Administration which may take the place of this immediately. I hear H.M. will have Sr T. Robinson Secy. of State again, which is neither here nor there, and Ld Winchelsea at the Admiralty, which, besides that it makes no vacancy at another place, will by no means grace or assist the new scheme. Lord Granville is superannuated, and will continue where he is. . . . Write, my dear Lord, your advice expeditiously, as well as fully, on this whole matter, and send it by the bearer of this. I shall possibly be press'd to take a place in Administration. Probably they won't make Ch. Townshend Secy-at-War; and many, many difficultys may arise, for Lord Hardwicke is afraid of Leicester House.

"I have seen Lord Waldegrave. The Duke of Newcastle talks of Lord Egmont for Secretary of State. I don't approve of that. But what is much worse, Lord Hardwicke will have Lord Anson restor'd, and they¹ want delay. I am to draw out my thoughts; I will not send them till I have yours. . . . And suppose the D. of Newcastle will not undertake, but will support Ministry. What would you then advise?"

Ilchester expressed great satisfaction at the proposals, especially with the first arrangement, in which his brother was to be Paymaster and manager of the House of Commons. He suggested that if Lady Caroline obtained her peerage, Fox might ask "to be made an Irish Lord by the same title as she takes." Dealing with individual appointments, he expressed an opinion that Anson's restoration was distinctly out of place at the moment, although he loved him and wished him well. Sackville should certainly be regained, if he could possibly be secured, but the advisability of accepting Egmont as Secretary of State was more doubtful. Was he to be introduced "by way of offence or jealousy"? That point should be cleared up. A situation of greatest difficulty would arise if Newcastle refused to accept the post offered

¹ "Ld Mansfield, Ld Hardwicke, Stone and the advisers of the D. of N." (H. Fox to Ilchester, March 7).

to him. In that case Ilchester had only two suggestions to make, *i.e.* that his brother should take the Treasury himself, or should prevail on Bedford to do so. Fox seemed ready, if necessary, to adopt the first solution, but with no pleasurable anticipations. "It is a sad alternative to take a most disagreeable and perhaps untenable post, or give up ev'ry thing to an insolent enemy."¹

Waldegrave had another interview, on March 5, with Newcastle, who then definitely refused to come in until supplies were raised and the Enquiry concluded. Cumberland and Fox, therefore, were definitely instructed to form a plan of Administration, for a fresh reason for immediate action had now arisen.² News had arrived in England that Marshal D'Estrées was threatening Hanover from the lower Rhine with 80,000 troops. The army of observation which had been voted for the protection of the King's German possessions was without a commander; and it was only natural that the Duke, for whom King Frederick had asked during the autumn, should be sent for to fill the post. Cumberland did not altogether relish his task. He foresaw that the forces at his disposal would be vastly inferior to the French in numbers, and he was well aware that the features of the country were not adapted to defensive operations. Further, he mistrusted Pitt, upon whom he would become dependent for supplies. He regarded him as the ally of his sister-in-law, and consequently as an enemy. It was with reluctance, therefore, that he accepted the command, in deference to his father's wishes; but he added a stipulation, possibly at Fox's suggestion, that Pitt should be dismissed from office before he left the country.

Fox's plan was laid before the King, on March 19, by

¹ Ilchester to H. Fox: H. Fox to Ilchester, March 5, 7, 1757.

² Newcastle to Hardwicke, March 5, 1757 (Add MSS. 32,870); Dodington's *Diary*, p. 392; Waldegrave's *Memoirs*, p. 102.

Lord Waldegrave, who had been fully informed of the particulars, but took no responsibility for them.¹

First, Holderness was to be ordered to dismiss Pitt and Temple. To this the King objected, hoping that Parliament would save him the trouble. Waldegrave argued, however, that many would be against the two men when out of office who would not dare to attack them while still in His Majesty's service. A further reason, "*ministers being routed by Parliament might be a bad precedent*," seemed to make some impression."

Secondly, Devonshire was to be approached to remain for an additional six months at the head of the Treasury, although he held the King's promise that his services should be dispensed with at the end of the session. He was not to be sounded as to the fate of Pitt and Temple, for he was known to be unwilling to become a party to the dismissal of those ministers.

Next, the King should see Newcastle and Hardwicke, and explain the proposed arrangement, "shewing them that their friends are all employed, and that when they please themselves to appear on the stage, room may easily be made for them." Clearly this was the key to the whole situation. Newcastle would have it in his power to return to the Treasury whenever he wished, and by the knowledge of his adherence to the system his followers would be induced to accept the offices which were to be proposed to them. If Legge would not remain Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Dupplin was suggested for the vacancy. For the Secretaryship, Lord George Sackville's name was substituted, but Fox had little expectation of securing Pitt's new recruit. In that case either Lords Egmont, Halifax or Winchilsea should be offered the post. Further, if new employment could be found for Holderness,

¹ The authorities are, various "Schemes for Ministry," in Fox's handwriting; Waldegrave to H. Fox, March 19. Also Dodington's *Diary*, p. 392; Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 196; Waldegrave's *Memoirs*, p. 102, etc.; and various letters, which will be cited in due course.

the other Secretary, it would put the Cabinet Council (to which Fox hoped that the King would summon Bedford, Halifax, Mansfield, Devonshire and the two Secretaries) on an entirely new footing. As no member of the original Administration would be included, there would be no excuse for any revival of the old clamour against it. The King wished to see Sir Thomas Robinson appointed to the vacant Secretaryship. But as Waldegrave believed that there was little chance of either Sackville or Egmont coming in, he did not attempt for the moment to combat His Majesty's resolve.

Fox destined Lord Halifax for the Admiralty. He had held the Board of Trade for upwards of nine years, and had recently aspired to the creation of a third Secretaryship of State—for the Colonies, the control of which was already in his department. Fox's advances to him were at first favourably received, although he expressed his preference for an office which he understood, rather than for one of which he had no knowledge. But in reality Halifax was playing a deep game. He was heart and soul with Newcastle, and was secretly plotting to defeat Fox's schemes. He sought, by fair words, to base his acceptance of office, first, upon Newcastle's co-operation with the Administration, and secondly, upon Robinson's acceptance of the seals, though all the while he was fully aware that there was little likelihood of either of these conditions being fulfilled.¹ Had this arrangement been concluded, Dodington was to be First Lord of Trade; and places were to be found for Lord Egmont, Lord Strange and Charles Townshend.

For himself, Fox proposed the Paymastership, but suggested a postponement of his entry into office until the end of the session. He hinted, however, at a hope that His Majesty might be induced to grant a peerage to his wife, in order to mark him out as the author of this scheme, and

¹ Halifax to H. Fox, March 18, 23, 24; B. Dodington to H. Fox, March 18, 1757.

as security against the anger of a subsequent reign. As alternatives, he suggested a reversion for his children or pension for a term of years. "I place myself where I can possibly give no umbrage to the Minister and have no access to the King, which I know will be more agreeable to him, and I sincerely wish to be most serviceable to him in the way that may be least disagreeable." Then finally, mindful as ever of his friends, Fox expressed his desire for a step in the peerage in favour of Lords Shelburne and Digby.

The King raised numerous objections, "but on the whole did not seem much displeased, though not quite satisfied.¹ He described the arrangement as possibly a good one for Fox, his friends and relations; but did not think that it would entirely answer his purpose. Yet after listening to explanations from Waldegrave, he agreed to authorise Fox to treat with the parties mentioned in the list.

It was then that the weakness and transparency of the proposals became apparent. Newcastle, led by Hardwicke, was uncompromising; and by his attitude prevented his followers from taking a part. Devonshire was unwilling to defer his release from the cares of office for even a day. Sackville was now firmly bound to Pitt, with whom Townshend was afraid to break. Egmont coveted a peerage; and besides, said frankly that he saw no stability in the system.² Strange, far away in the country, was not actually approached. Dodington was prepared to come in as Treasurer of the Navy; but he alone was a poor foundation upon which to build up a ministry. In vain Fox sought to entice Bedford into becoming head of the Treasury. No one would take an oar in a boat which seemed too frail to withstand the first storm.

In one respect, however, the situation remained un-

¹ Waldegrave to H. Fox [March 19, 1757].

² H. Fox to Waldegrave, March 19, 1757.

altered by the failure of these negotiations. The old King and his son were as determined as ever to effect the removal of Pitt and Temple, come what might. Their resolve was strengthened by what they believed to be an additional instance of the duplicity of Leicester House. It had been sedulously put about that Pitt had refused to carry a message to the Commons, asking for 4,000 British troops to accompany the Duke abroad. The rumour was so generally credited and so ill received that it was thought desirable to issue an authoritative denial. Fox therefore called upon Legge, in Pitt's absence, to announce that no such suggestion had even been discussed. This he did in his place in the House of Commons; and Fox at the same time delivered a message from Cumberland stating that there had never been an idea of the proposal.¹

On March 25, Waldegrave again went to see Newcastle, and asked his opinion of what was the best line for the King to take, if, as His Majesty thought probable, Pitt and Temple should quit his service in the near future. Newcastle's reply, given in the form of a memorandum, expressed his disbelief in the likelihood of any such eventuality, except by *removal*, a course which he strongly deprecated; but should the unexpected come about, he advised the King to go on provisionally, without filling the vacancies.² His Majesty did not seem displeased at this answer, but complained that "everybody thought of themselves, and did not enough consider what he was obliged to go through."³ Now in order to effect some settlement before Cumberland's departure, an offer of the Admiralty was made to Lord Winchilsea, who had previously held that post. He accepted unwillingly on April 1. "The task was disagreeable, arduous, dangerous and suddenly impos'd, but if H.M. thought it necessary to keep him on the throne, he should not think himself

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii, 198; *Bedford Corres.*, ii, 240.

² March 25, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,870).

³ A. Stone to Newcastle, March 26, 1757 (*ibid.*)

at liberty to disobey.”¹ At the same time, the King granted to Fox the reversion of Dodington's Clerkship of the Pells in Ireland, for the lives of his two eldest sons.²

Winchilsea kissed hands for the appointment on April 5, the very day on which Temple was notified by Lord Holderness of his dismissal. It had been hoped that in consequence of his friend's treatment Pitt would tender his immediate resignation. But Legge had prevailed on him to await removal, and he received notice to quit on the following evening. Legge, Sir Richard Lyttelton, Potter and the Grenvilles followed their leader into retirement. Charles Townshend, half-hearted in his allegiance to Pitt, resigned three weeks later.

On the 9th, Cumberland went abroad. “He embarked with satisfaction,” says Walpole, “telling Mr Conway the King could not be in a worse situation than he had been.” Conway was not inclined to be optimistic. “Yes, Sir,” said he, “but he will, if Mr Pitt gets the better.” The Duke had had his way in breaking up the Ministry, and left before the more difficult part of the business was accomplished. The problem of the Admiralty Board was easily solved, and the appointments to it were made without delay. Fox thought it would be the wisest plan to leave the other posts vacant until after the Enquiry, which, as we saw, was fixed for the 19th. Indeed, he and Dodington refused to kiss hands for their respective offices, when summoned to do so on April 6³: and the King readily agreed to postpone the ceremony until the coming ordeal had taken place.⁴

¹ H. Fox to Sir Jacob Downing [April 10, 1757]. The answer hardly betokens “most unfashionable readiness” to accept, of which Lord Waldegrave speaks (*Memoirs*, p. 107).

² Walpole relates (*Last Journals*, i. 433) that Princess Amelia once told him that she heard the King attach a condition to the reversion, that Fox should never ask for a peerage; but added that he did not think that the promise could be binding after George's death. The sinecure seems to have averaged about £2,500 a year during Fox's tenure.

³ Dodington's *Diary*, p. 396.

⁴ Cumberland to H. Fox, April 6, 1757.

Fox's advice was not followed, and different counsels prevailed. Lord Egremont was pointed at as the new Secretary, and for a time seemed to acquiesce in the arrangement; but at the last moment cried off. Next, Sir Thomas Robinson received a peremptory order from the King to fill the breach, and a like message was sent to Lord Dupplin with regard to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Both excused themselves on the score of incapacity. The latter had been piqued at the way in which the Paymastership was wrested from him, for he had received no intimation that he was expected to surrender it, until told by Fox himself that the King had ordered him to kiss hands for it.¹ Sir George Lee, it is true, showed his willingness to become Chancellor; and there was still an off chance that Devonshire might be cajoled into keeping the Treasury until the commencement of the next session.² But every day proved more clearly that Newcastle held the key of the situation in his hands. Unless he could be induced to adopt an altered demeanour, it seemed likely that the King would repent of his haste. His Majesty was again in danger of being forced to place his reliance on men whom he hated and despised.

¹ Newcastle to Hardwicke, April 8, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,870).

² H. Fox to Ilchester, April 5, 1757. "His Grace stays to any time the King pleases short of next sessions; and before its meeting the King has promised to let him go to a place not ministerial."

CHAPTER XX

NOTWITHSTANDING the difficulties which he had encountered, Fox was in hopes that with the termination of the Enquiry the situation might become less complex. He had already announced, with Waldegrave's full approval, that he would be ready, under certain circumstances, to give up the idea of the Paymastership.

"If the Duke of Newcastle and Ld Hardwicke will come in as ministers, I do not propose to do more than support Him in the H. of Commons, without being suppos'd, as formerly, to have a share in measures & in power, which I am sure they never could allow me. If they will not come in as ministers, but will support, I shall then be desir'd to take a share, and only a share, in the Administration, by perhaps being Chr of the Exchr to some great lord who may be H.M.'s minister for the H. of Lords, &c. If they should really join with Leicester House, Lord Bute, &c., then more power will be necessary to the man who in the H. of Commons is to stem so strong a tide, and I shall be call'd, perhaps, to a post of as much trouble and danger as any man was ever placed in." ¹

Fox seems to have been genuinely anxious to stand by the King in his troubles, and laid stress upon this point in consulting the opinion of his friends. "H.M. must not be given up. I wish it may fall to the lot of abler than I am to defend him, but I dare believe you would have me join with any who will do it, and that without regard to my future fortune." ²

On April 13, Fox was sent for by the King. It is un-

¹ H. Fox to Sir J. Downing [April 10, 1757].

² *Ibid.*

fortunate that we have no record of what transpired at this audience. At least we may conclude that his reception was of a cordial nature.¹ Matters remained more or less at a standstill until after the termination of the debate upon the Enquiry. But by that time a change had come over the scene. The dismissal of Pitt had brought the temper of the nation most clearly to light. The favour which he had shown towards Byng was in a moment forgotten. He and Legge became joint recipients of the freedom of London and of many provincial towns. The stocks fell, and the City declaimed loudly "against Mr Fox and his military Administration."² Public opinion made itself felt in no uncertain form. Fox had misjudged the consequences of delay. The position was one to deter waverers from joining him rather than to attract them to his banner. Any further attempt to form a separate Administration of his own seemed doomed to failure.

This popular demonstration was not lost on Newcastle, whose notions of political success were bound up in the principle of drifting with the current. He had also realised from Pitt's attitude that he had nothing to fear for his conduct in the past from that quarter. All things considered, alliance with the late Secretary of State seemed to foreshadow the better result, and by the end of April his Grace had quite made up his mind to strive for that object. Within a few days of Pitt's dismissal Newcastle had received a hint, in a letter from Lord Ashburnham, that the former was now favourable to some accommodation, in which Leicester House would be included.³ No progress on these lines, however, was made during the month; though meanwhile Newcastle entered into a secret and abortive negotiation with Legge, whose friendship with Pitt was weakened by the subsequent

¹ "I am glad the King gave you the reception your behaviour towards him deserves; and I did not doubt but he would speak out freely" (Cumberland to H. Fox, May 2, 1757).

² Gen. J. Abercromby to Halifax, April 7, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,870).

³ Newcastle to Hardwicke, April 8, 1757 (*ibid.*).

disclosure of this treachery. Certainly his Grace was not lacking in encouragement. Devonshire, especially, professed his desire for an Administration which would include Newcastle and Pitt, with Fox as Paymaster. He had assured himself of Fox's co-operation in anything that would tend to the King's comfort. Indeed, after the first division upon the Enquiry, Fox had said that the numbers showed too plainly where people were looking, and therefore wished him "to endeavour a reconciliation of all sides."¹ The Primate of Ireland's advice was also strongly thrown into the same scale. That astute cleric had his own reasons for desiring a junction between Pitt and Newcastle. He vainly hoped that Bedford might, from annoyance, throw up his Lord-Lieutenancy.²

But when, after two meetings between Newcastle and Bute, an interview was arranged early in May between Hardwicke and Pitt, the latter's terms were found to be too high.³ Nor did he seem more willing to moderate his demands when Devonshire reassumed the post of Lord Chamberlain on May 16, a few days after the death of the Duke of Grafton, who had held it. On the one hand, Newcastle might feel content with the certainty that Pitt and Fox would not coalesce, and that they were separately powerless to form a Government.⁴ But, on the other, Pitt seemed resolved to limit his Grace's authority; and alliance with Fox, which promised more

¹ Devonshire to Cumberland, May 5, 1757 (*Torrens*, ii. 379). The Duke agreed, in reply, that Devonshire's plan was what he himself would wish under the circumstances (Cumberland to Devonshire, May 23, 1757. Devonshire MSS.).

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 210.

³ There seems to have been an earlier conversation than that to which Walpole alludes. He speaks of the second week in May, and von Ruville locates it "about May 11." But Newcastle, writing to Chesterfield on May 7 (Add. MSS. 32,871), said, "I am sorry to acquaint your Lordship, that both by Bute's discourse, as well as what has since passed between my Lord Hardwicke and Mr Pitt, I find the demands are so high, that it will be impossible to have them complied with."

⁴ Newcastle's Memorandum, May 12, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,871).

favourable terms, was rendered impossible by the threatened opposition of Leicester House. No wonder that Newcastle relapsed into his former state of pitiful uncertainty.

"On Tuesday,¹ Mr Pitt having requir'd of the Duke of Newcastle, among other terms of like nature, that George Grenville should be Chancellr of the Exchequer, and Potter and Jas Grenville Lords of the Treasury, in order that Pitt might have a majority against his Grace at his own board and giving that reason for it, his Grace, influenc'd by Lord Lincoln, who is now a favourite at Leicester House, inclin'd to yield to them; when Egmont, Hume-Campbell, Sir Thos Robinson, Sir Geo. Lee and others, told his Grace that if he did, ev'ry friend he had would despise and leave him. He therefore did not comply, and Pitt, &c., declar'd all treaty at an end; and the Primate, Lord George, &c., were very melancholy."²

In a momentary burst of courage Newcastle announced on the following day that he would take office on his own account. Lee was to be Chancellor of the Exchequer, Egmont and Halifax Secretary of State and First Lord of Trade respectively, as they might arrange between themselves. Dupplin would be Treasurer of the Chambers, Fox Paymaster, and Dodington Treasurer of the Navy. "This would certainly," wrote Fox, "have made him strong enough in the H. of Commons, and a man must be as timid as the D. of N. not to venture on such ground. But Lord Mansfield frightens him one way, Lord Lincoln another. And yesterday, Pitt, etc., frightened at the prospect of their situation, have proposed more moderate terms, and Lord Lincoln brings his Grace into a fresh treaty. But what the terms are to be is not yet known."³

Having made up his mind that this scheme could have been made to answer, Fox was disappointed to see it break down, especially through the medium of Newcastle's

¹ May 17.

² H. Fox to Cumberland, May 20, 1757.

³ *Ibid.*

favourite nephew, Lincoln, whom he thoroughly mistrusted. He was becoming more and more weighed down by the responsibility which Cumberland's absence had thrown upon his shoulders.

"I am extremely uneasy, from what I hear is the language of Pitt's friends and must be the consequence of their coming in. 'They think it their duty to come in, and they must not be nice about the terms when the object is so great, no less than to protect the succession and save the country from military government.' If then Mr Pitt comes now, it is in behalf of Savile House, as he calls it, and to no other house will any man hereafter look." ¹

Fox's endeavour throughout had been "to make it impossible for Pitt to be the tyrant he intended to be, and to prevent his *striding o'er this narrow world like a Colossus*." ² But were he now to acquiesce silently in Pitt's triumph, planned for the express purposes of assuring Newcastle's future favour with the Prince and of securing the latter "against what is scandalously suggested to him against the Duke," Fox felt that he might correctly be reproached for neglecting the honour of the King, and even more so that of Cumberland, who was absent abroad and ignorant of what was being done. Further, he had a strong personal interest in the settlement. He had by no means dismissed from his mind the distasteful possibility of having to war single-handed against the combined forces of Leicester House, Pitt and Newcastle. If Newcastle and Pitt could not come to terms on a reasonable basis, and if Newcastle would not take the job on by himself, what was left but for Fox to step into the breach and do the best he could? Better far this for the King, than to be handed, fettered and bound, to the tender mercy of Pitt and the Princess of Wales. Another time, if the former proved too hard a

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire, May 22, 1757 (draft).

² H. Fox to W. Ellis, May 30, 1757.

taskmaster, there would be no Winchilsea, no Bedford, ready to come to the rescue, as was now the case.

With this intent Fox urged Devonshire to frustrate the new plan, or at least to delay it until Cumberland could be thoroughly consulted. As an alternative, might it not be possible, he asked, to convince Newcastle that his recent scheme was feasible and that the business of the House of Commons could be carried on with ease and security without Pitt and his allies? He himself had little doubt that such a course was practicable.¹

A meeting between Pitt and Newcastle was arranged at Lord Royston's on the 25th, whose father, Hardwicke, was also present. Difficulties arose, notably on the appointments to the Exchequer seals and to the Admiralty. Negotiations were again broken off. Once more his Grace shewed a bold front, and prepared to take office. For that purpose he arranged an audience with the King on the 27th. The interview took place at Kensington, and lasted for an hour and twenty minutes. Devonshire reported to Fox that he might look upon the matter as settled. "He came out exceedingly well pleas'd, and tho' he did not absolutely accept, he only desir'd a day or two to consult his friends."²

The main outlines of Newcastle's plan were similar to those of his former proposal, but he began to experience various difficulties with his friends, some of whom were shrinking, as the time approached, from the task of controlling the Commons without Henry Fox. The latter was to be accommodated with the Pay Office, as the King desired it so, but would be expressly excluded from any shadow of power in or out of the House.

To this political effacement Fox raised no objection. Rightly or wrongly he had made up his mind that he would prefer to see Newcastle at the head of the Admin-

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire, May 22, 1757 (draft); H. Fox to Cumberland, May 27, 1757.

² Devonshire to H. Fox, May 28, 1757.

istration, and to assist him as Paymaster—"a system as safe for him as easy for me."¹ For the sake of the settlement which he conceived would be the most satisfactory for the King's affairs, and which was certainly the most favourable to his own inclinations, he was willing to accept "a place, that in many people's opinions is a disgrace, in no man's a promotion."² But on one point he was firmly resolved. He insisted that the Pay Office should be given to him of His Majesty's own free will, not thrown to him by Newcastle as a sop. The knowledge that the latter was trying to create delays and to deter him from kissing the King's hand, added strength to his determination. Fox attributed his Grace's unwillingness to a fear that the fact of his appointment might deter others from joining the Administration, an attitude which he considered most unfair towards him in the part he was taking.

"I did not come time enough to be at the levee."³ The D. of Devonshire says the King thinks I ought to be P.master directly, but yet his Grace is afraid to fix it, till the D. of N. is consulted; whereas the moment his Grace of N. has it in his power to deliberate upon the day I am to kiss hands, the employment is an affront, not a favour. I hope I am not too proud when I say I will not assist his Grace as 3d or 4th man in the H. of Commons, by any arrangement of his Grace's. It must be by the King's order, and out of obedience to H.M. I intend therefore, my dear Lord, to have an audience to-morrow, and to desire H.M. to fix the day, or to excuse my ever taking it. I should not, I hope, consent to be *kick'd* into a *high* employment; I am very sure I won't *court disgrace*. The reasons why I trouble your Lordship with all this, are, first, that you may, if you please, not appoint any conversation between the D. of N. and me, with whom I will have none till I *am* Paymaster; the

¹ H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, May 24, 1757.

² H. Fox to Devonshire, June 1757 (Devonshire MSS.).

³ Fox was absent at Goodwood from May 28 until the evening of the 31st.

next, that yr Lordsp may assist me, by asking his Grace whether he thinks retarding my kissing hands the way to make me more his friend? Or whether he intends to go on without me? And to say that if it is delay'd, I will not accept it, as upon my word of honour I will not. I have wrote the D. of Devonshire word so. But, my dear Lord, a fatality has attended ev'ry thing his Grace has undertaken to manage for me. I will call it by no other name. A very contrary event has succeeded whatever your Lordship has had the goodness to interpose in." ¹

To Devonshire Fox wrote in the same strain, and in a second letter quoted the opinion which Waldegrave had freely expressed, that he would be justified in throwing up the whole business, if he was not actually appointed to the Pay Office before the termination of the session.² Realising that his friend was in earnest, Devonshire took pains to influence Newcastle, and urged the folly of quarrelling with the man, who, failing Pitt, was a necessity to his scheme. Besides, Fox had desired him to say that he would loyally refrain from interference or recommendations, and would support Newcastle as cordially and zealously as if they were brothers. The latter's answer was couched in his usual despondent strain. He had desired delay from no personal dislike or disinclination to Fox. He complained of his distresses and difficulties. The supposed junction had already created a flame, and he had been given to understand that he might expect a more violent opposition against him than ever there was against Sir Robert Walpole.³

But by this time the whole situation was again rapidly changing. Newcastle returned to Kensington on June 3, and asked to be allowed to postpone his final answer for a further four days. On reaching home he found a letter from Lord Chesterfield, who urged the necessity of coming

¹ H. Fox to Waldegrave, May 31, 1757.

² H. Fox to Devonshire, [probably June 2], 1757 (Devonshire MSS.).

³ Devonshire to Newcastle, June 1; Newcastle to Devonshire, June 2, 1757 (Devonshire MSS.).

to some agreement with Pitt and Leicester House, and held out hopes of an accommodation on terms favourable to all parties.

The truth was that the Princess of Wales and her adherents had become thoroughly alarmed at the thought that Newcastle might be successful in forming a Cabinet, and were beginning to doubt whether their impracticability had not been carried too far. King Frederick's recent victory at Prague had opened their eyes to the possibility of Cumberland's return to England in the rôle of a conqueror. In that case Fox's stock would rise in the markets, and their own would undergo a corresponding depreciation. It seemed, therefore, clearly advisable to keep in close touch with Newcastle. With that object in view Bute had been despatched to obtain Lord Chesterfield's assistance; while Pitt was persuaded to forego his determination to appoint George Grenville Chancellor of the Exchequer.¹ A meeting, which produced far-reaching results, was arranged between Newcastle, Bute and Pitt on June 4—the Prince of Wales's birthday. George Grenville told one of Fox's friends later in the day, that the latter would kiss hands for the Treasury or nothing; hinting that they would rather see him at the head of the Treasury than Paymaster supporting the Duke of Newcastle.² Fox, it was well known, was more eager than ever to kiss hands, and but for Newcastle's entreaties seemed likely to have succeeded.³ He mentioned the 8th to Waldegrave as a desirable day for the ceremony, but wrote to Devonshire on the 6th: "I am very glad I have said nothing to the King, nor shall I say anything that may embarrass what seems to be already in so untoward a way. Were I to say anything, it should be

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 218; Waldegrave's *Memoirs*, p. 110. Newcastle plainly stated in a letter to Devonshire (June 5, 1757, Devonshire MSS.) that he received Chesterfield's letter after his audience with the King on June 3.

² H. Fox to Waldegrave, June 5, 1757.

³ Newcastle to Hardwicke, June 4, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,871).

that difficulties are almost always multiply'd by delay ; but I shall not even say that." ¹

After frequent conferences Pitt's scheme for an Administration took concrete shape, and was presented to the King by Newcastle on the 7th. The latter can have been in no doubt as to the way in which it would be received. It seems incredible that in his heart he can have relished the proposed arrangements, but he craftily determined that the onus of refusal should not rest upon his shoulders. In the list which Pitt had drawn up both Winchilsea and Fox were displaced from the posts which the King had bargained should be given to them ; and the royal bugbear, Temple, was again to be included in the Cabinet Council.

George was furious, and instantly rejected the proposals *in toto*, relying on Newcastle to revive his former plan. This he had stipulated in case of failure when he gave his consent to a renewal of the negotiation with Pitt, after Chesterfield's letter had been referred to him. But he was soon to discover his mistake. His Grace now firmly refused to take part in any Administration without the assistance of Pitt and his associates, to whom he had an unequalled opportunity of proving his importance. Further, he refused the King's request for co-operation and support in the event of a Fox Ministry, and was dismissed from the closet loaded with contumely and reproach.

In his rage at the turn things were taking, the King made up his mind to try any expedient rather than to submit to his grandson's court. He at once summoned Fox.

"The King on Tuesday sent to me, and with such expressions of distress as were very affecting told me that they had sent him such terms as, if he consented, he must be a prisoner and a slave for life, and should be us'd accordingly ; and commanded me to be his minister

¹ Devonshire MSS.

in the H. of Commons, asking me if I thought I could carry on his affairs there. I answer'd that I could by no means promise success, as the D. of Newcastle would give the King no assurance of his assistance. I therefore advis'd H.M. to do anything that he thought would procure him ease. He said his hope of that was over ; it could not be worse for him, and I must try. If nothing better could be thought of, I said, and not else. I was ready to do my best."¹

For the head of the Treasury His Majesty had in his mind to employ Lord Waldegrave, a high-minded and upright man enough, but lacking in the business knowledge essential for so lofty a post. He accepted with deep reluctance, hesitating to refuse his assistance when the King was in such dire distress.²

Fox was sent for by His Majesty on the morning of the 8th,³ and determined that evening at Holland House, in consultation with Waldegrave and Devonshire, to take the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Bedford was to be offered the Lord Presidency. Lord Egremont should be Secretary of State, and Winchilsea remain at the Admiralty. Fox was despondent and doubtful of success. He had become infected by the fears of Devonshire, who foresaw that "Newcastle's perfidy was *sans bornes*,"⁴ and had discovered during the day that certain members of the Commons to whom he had looked for ready support, were not so eager to come forward as he had expected. Besides, a motion by Ellis for a temporary adjournment of the Commons was defeated in a thin House—an unfortunate commencement for the new Administration. Fox's reception by the King had also damped his ardour. "His Majesty began by reproaching him very roundly ; said he was the author of all their confusion by resigning last October. After

¹ H. Fox to Strange, June 10, 1757.

² Waldegrave's *Memoirs*, p. 115. See Appendix E.

³ H. Fox to Bedford, June 14, 1757 (*Bedford Corres.*, ii. 245).

⁴ H. Fox to Cumberland, June 10, 1757.

he had dwelled a great while on this topic, he commended him for his behaviour this session.”¹ It was hardly the spirit in which Fox expected that the offer of his services would be accepted, and he was correspondingly depressed.

In the course of the day, Waldegrave had gone out of his way to find Newcastle, and related to him, without suspicion of evil, the circumstances in which he was now placed. His Grace, horrified at the fair prospects of the new Ministry, took immediate steps to defeat them. The first-fruits of his interference were patent on the following day, when Holdernessee arrived at Kensington to resign his Secretary's seals. The King received this proof of his protégé's ingratitude with chilling scorn. He did not even condescend to ask the reason, and affected to treat the matter as of no account.

But worse was to follow. Hints of further resignations and even of open opposition were noised abroad. The Dukes of Rutland and Leeds were to retire at once. Lords Buckingham, Coventry and Rockingham seemed likely to follow their example.

In the evening, another meeting was held, at which Devonshire, Waldegrave, Fox, Winchilsea and Granville were present. “Fox seemed still anxious and doubtful, having received no new encouragement since the last meeting.” The new comers, however, were cheerful and sanguine, and the conference broke up “in tolerable good spirits.”²

On the morning of the 10th, Newcastle sent for Waldegrave, and vainly endeavoured to efface from his mind the idea that he was in any way connected with Holdernessee's retirement or with the threatened resignations. His statements were contradictory, for in the heat of the moment he permitted himself to glory in his power of emptying the court by a single word. No greater proof

¹ Ilchester to Digby, June 13, 1757 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, viii. App. p. 225a).

² Waldegrave's *Memoirs*, p. 121.

of his hostility, indeed, was necessary than the refusal of Halifax, Oswald and others of his partizans to take office ; for they had already declared their willingness to act, if left to their own inclinations. Circumstances did not favour belief in the neutrality which his Grace so eagerly professed.

Waldegrave found the King much dispirited. He complained that Fox's negotiations were not progressing, and that everyone was deserting him. He seemed afraid that the meeting arranged for the evening would prove all to no purpose. This consultation was swelled by the presence of Bedford, and of Gower, who had been introduced to replace Lord Holderness. Bedford was filled with optimism. He declared that the Administration would be infinitely the strongest that had ever been known in the country ; and was "almost in a passion" with Fox for having raised some difficulties. Waldegrave, though fully convinced that matters were in a desperate state, took a spirited part and declared his intentions of going on. It was arranged that the attempt should be made ; and the ministers elect were ordered to assemble at Kensington next morning. Yet, at the close of the meeting, Bedford whispered to Waldegrave that he thought it was all waste of time, for Fox had not spirit enough to undertake the House of Commons, and there was no one but him fit to do so.

There was certainly solid foundation for Fox's despondency. Refusal after refusal taught him the futility of a struggle against the combined forces of Newcastle and Pitt. Even the Tory Lord Strange expressed his unwillingness to take the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, a post which he was well known to covet. A well-meant, but utterly visionary scheme propounded by Horace Walpole, and conceived with the express view of compassing the downfall of Newcastle, raised no fresh prospect of success. Fox was in two minds whether or no it was wisest to continue till actually beaten—a des-

perate course which would necessitate desperate measures. "If we go on, we must go on full speed, and turn out as well as put in."¹ On the other hand, to throw up the sponge at once might mean more favourable terms for himself, and would certainly afford the King a better chance of retaining some of his friends in his service. Not one would be spared in the event of a victory for Leicester House. Fox knew too that His Majesty had no desire to fight a losing battle, and therefore determined to speak out his mind in the closet when he went to receive the seals. He would tell the King, whom he had not seen for two days, that in his opinion the system would not do. He would place himself unreservedly in his hands.²

It had been arranged that Mansfield, the Lord Chief Justice, should hand over next morning to the King the Exchequer seals, which he had held since Legge's resignation. Before the appointed hour, he had made it his business to see Lord Ilchester. He made no secret of his belief that Fox was going to his ruin, and repeated to Devonshire in even more vehement terms his conviction that the scheme was impracticable. The latter secretly held the same opinion; but had weakly refrained from expressing it, for he already knew that he was looked upon as "too cool and rather backward." He found Waldegrave and Fox before they went to court, and satisfied them that all must be at an end.³ Mansfield was summoned first to the closet. He placed the whole situation, without any concealment, before the King, who besought his advice; and received a commission to negotiate with Pitt and Newcastle.⁴ His Majesty again stipulated that Winchilsea should remain, that Fox

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire [June 10, 1757] (Devonshire MSS.).

² H. Digby to Digby, June 11; Ilchester to Digby, June 13, 1757 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, viii. App. p. 225a); H. Fox to Bedford, June

14.

³ Devonshire to Cumberland, June 17, 1757 (Devonshire MSS.).

⁴ H. Digby to Digby, June 11.

should have the Pay Office on account of his former promise, and that Temple should not obtain a seat in the Cabinet.

Fox, who went in next, was treated with the greatest kindness. He declared his willingness to proceed, notwithstanding his doubts, should the King wish him to do so—a resolution which he had already communicated to Mansfield.¹ George told him what had transpired, and displayed great emotion. He said that he now looked upon himself in the light of a prisoner. Fox should certainly be Paymaster, if he still had the power to appoint him. But this he seemed to doubt. “He had not thought that he had so many of Newcastle’s *footmen* about him; soon, he supposed, he should not be able to make a page of the back-stairs.”²

Waldegrave succeeded Fox. He was equally frank in his survey of the position, and by his suggestions and recommendations paved the way for the final settlement.

Bedford alone of the would-be ministers shewed his annoyance and disappointment at the failure of the proposals. He vented his wrath on Fox, who wrote him a long vindication of his motives. His letter “pleased wonderfully”³; and Bedford, in acknowledgment, confessed that his anger at the ungrateful usage which the King had experienced, and his concern at differing from his friend about the best means of extricating His Majesty, had led him, on the spur of the moment, “to say more than he had intended.”⁴

The new negotiations did not long remain in the hands of the Lord Chief Justice. On the 14th, Lord Hardwicke was summoned by Devonshire to come to Kensington on the following day. He there received the King’s commands to undertake the business, and to proceed without

¹ Dupplin to Duchess of Newcastle, June 13, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,871).

² Walpole’s *Memoirs*, ii, 223.

³ R. Rigby to H. Fox, June 16, 1757.

⁴ Bedford to H. Fox, June 16, 1757.

delay.¹ By the 18th, after a series of interviews with Pitt, Bute and Newcastle, he was in a position to carry to His Majesty a plan which conceded his most important stipulations.² Fox was to be Paymaster, and Barrington to remain Secretary-at-War, thereby frustrating the appointment of Lord George Sackville, to whom the King shewed strong antipathy. Winchilsea's willingness to give up the Admiralty had lightened Hardwicke's task, and enabled him, with His Majesty's full approbation, to reintroduce Anson into his old post. Pitt demurred at his reappointment, but finally gave way. In return, he was permitted to bring Temple into the Cabinet as Lord Privy Seal, a post which would bring the latter but seldom into personal communication with the monarch.

The principal details of the Administration were thus satisfactorily concluded before the receipt of the news, on the 24th, of Frederick's utter defeat at Kolin. Had the intelligence arrived sooner, the knowledge that he was becoming indispensable might perhaps have stiffened Pitt's back, and produced a demand for more stringent terms. As it was, things had gone too far to draw back; though the question of the minor appointments dragged on for another fortnight, and ministers did not kiss hands until the 29th. After an interval of over ten weeks, during which the country had remained practically without a Government, a Ministry was formed which proved competent to guide it triumphantly through one of the greatest crises in its existence, and to establish without a shadow of doubt the fact that Great Britain still remained the greatest nation in the world.

Fox was more than delighted at the turn affairs had taken. He had remained in a state of uncomfortable suspense during Mansfield's negotiations, especially after the arrival upon the scene of Hardwicke, who, he believed, would lose no opportunity of doing him mischief. So

¹ Devonshire to Hardwicke, June 14, 1757 (Devonshire MSS.).

² Hardwicke to Anson, June 18, 1757 (*Life of Hardwicke*, ii. 404).

uneasy was he, that Ilchester wrote a long letter, on the 12th, to Devonshire. The latter was soon to unburden himself for ever of his unwelcome load of responsibility and to content himself with the ceremonious duties of his post at court. Ilchester implored him to ask the King to grant Fox a pension of £2,000 a year on Ireland during Dodington's life-time, if the Pay Office was to be refused. He pointed out, quite regardless of the extra cost involved to the public, that the grant would place his brother in immediate possession of an income which might otherwise never be of personal advantage to him; for Dodington's life was just as good as the latter's, although he was twelve years the elder. Besides, to grant Fox no favour at all, would only be considered in the light of a rebuff to Cumberland and a triumph for his enemies.

"I am extremely anxious about this affair, and very solicitous that one of these schemes should succeed; because by either of them my brother will be enabled to live cheerfully and agreeably at Holland House among his friends, without ever having a thought of being again in the Ministry. But if neither of them prevails, and he is to be turned quite adrift, he must then quit Holland House, alter his plan of living, and retire into the country; and how shocking such an alteration at his time of life must be is easier to be imagined than submitted to." ¹

But the King's persistence had its effect, although Hardwicke tried hard to win a place for Sackville as a set-off to that for Fox. The latter was duly grateful.

"I am infinitely obliged to H.M., who has insisted, not only by word of mouth, but in writing, on my being Paymaster, the situation of all others I like best. And in it I will do my best to preserve peace to the K. and Parlt, which most people think can not long be preserved by this system, but I see no improbability of it. The

¹ Devonshire MSS. Printed in *Torrens*, ii. 393, where an important and material portion of the letter is omitted.

world thinks I cannot act my part in it, which is to set still, but yr R.H. shall see that when to set still and give no offence is honorable, it is as agreeable to my nature as what I have been so long engaged in.”¹

But before Fox was able to sink into that retirement which he had allowed himself to covet, he had yet another trial to face. His new office necessitated re-election for Windsor, and five days before the poll an unexpected candidate was put forward, in the person of Mr Bowles, a rich inhabitant of the town and the possessor of large estates in Oxfordshire.² This opposition was rendered more formidable by the backing of a Jacobite subscription of £5,000, and by the fact that the St Albans family, whose interest was of great importance in the borough, were prepared to throw the whole weight of their support into the scale on Bowles's behalf.³ Fox was on tenter-hooks. His prospects were at first distinctly unpromising. He was out of favour with a certain section of the Whigs for his behaviour in the previous October ; and his general unpopularity was not lessened by his recent acceptance of the lucrative post. He left no stone unturned to retain the seat. He spent money like water. Nor was he too proud to approach Newcastle, who alone could exercise the requisite influence. His Grace came handsomely to the rescue, intent, in this case, on pleasing the King, who went out of his way to give the new Paymaster all the assistance in his power.⁴ To make matters worse, in the height of the struggle Fox fell ill, and took to his bed ;⁵ while Barrington, who was sent down to help, failed in his attempts to buy off Bowles. But in the end New-

¹ H. Fox to Cumberland, June 21, 1757.

² H. Fox to Devonshire, July 1, 1757 (Devonshire MSS.).

³ R. Rigby to Bedford, July 2, 1757 (*Bedford Corres.*, ii. 261). Fox believed that the attack was aimed at him in revenge for his action in a recent Oxfordshire election (H. Fox to J. Campbell, July 9, 1757).

⁴ H. Fox to Newcastle, July 1, 2, 6 ; Newcastle to H. Fox, July 1 ; Newcastle to Devonshire, July 3, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,872).

⁵ R. Rigby to Bedford, July 2, 1757.

castle's authority asserted itself. Fox was successfully returned by a majority of 51. The election cost him £4,000, "besides more anxiety than he ever had in his life!"¹

Fox's acceptance of the Pay Office opens up a new epoch in his history and we must pause to consider his purpose in taking so retrograde a step. His downward path had commenced when he allowed himself to accept office from Newcastle, whom he disliked and mistrusted. Then at least he was goaded into action by the spur of ambition. Now, in the climax of his career, even ambition was wanting. He had shed his desire to climb to the topmost rung of the ladder, and appeared ready, even content, to serve in a secondary post under those who had been lately his inferiors. So abrupt a descent seemed to negative the likelihood that he could ever regain a semblance of political power. He was sacrificing his good name with his own and succeeding generations for the sake of a fortune, which might at best prove a solace to his declining years. What were his reasons for so startling a resolve?

We have had occasion more than once in the course of our narrative to refer to Fox's unpopularity. Its growth is more easy to trace and account for than its origin. It is true that the better educated classes were beginning to look askance at the political methods of the Walpole school; and Fox, as one of its leading exponents, was becoming a prominent mark for their vituperations. But by itself this is insufficient explanation for the flame of ill-feeling which had suddenly burst forth against him; for his geniality, his open-heartedness, his frankness, and above all the adoration of a large circle of friends, were all valuable assets to be added to the credit side of his balance-sheet.

Can it be that the commencement of his unpopularity

¹ Provost of Eton to Harrington, July 9, 1757 (*Hist. MSS. Comm. Rep.*, x. p. 314).

was largely the reflected unpopularity of his patron, Cumberland? Certainly its early stages were closely coincident with his recognition as the Duke's right-hand man. The victor of Culloden had been unable to live down the torrent of abuse, which, rightly or wrongly, had greeted his pacification of the Highlands; nor had his subsequent failure in the Low Countries and his coarse and unbending personality reinstated him in the good opinion of his father's subjects. If our surmise is correct, Fox lost in the end more than he had benefited by this connection, even though he owed to it the favour of King George.

Unpopular Fox had certainly become; nor was he long in realising how rapidly he was losing ground in the estimation of his countrymen. In his case this fact alone was likely to make little difference. His nature was ever ready to kick against the pricks. A sense of an injustice which he was powerless to correct was always for him an incentive to revolt. His total disregard for the opinion of the public was his worst stumbling-block on his road to success. Too callous to make any attempt to win back their respect, his gratitude to and affection for Cumberland impelled him to further efforts on behalf of his royal patron. Thereby he increased the inveterate hostility of Leicester House against him.

With Pelham's death the real difficulties of Fox's position had commenced. Newcastle, as we have seen, was never sincerely his friend; Hardwicke was his declared foe. His unnatural alliance with these worthies disgusted Pitt, who, considering himself deserted, gave in to the blandishments of the Princess of Wales. This was a fatal blow to Fox's prospects. He had to face both the thinly disguised antagonism of Newcastle and the open animosity of Pitt and Leicester House. His political horizon was bounded by the commencement of a new reign. King George was an old man; his days on earth seemed numbered. To rise to giddy heights by his favour could but

lead to a corresponding fall at his grandson's accession. Fox suffered severely for the lack of that popular commendation which was Pitt's trump card. Indeed, his resignation in the previous autumn had confirmed the general suspicion, that his politics were more coloured by self-interest than influenced by what seemed best for the welfare of the State.

Confronted by these obstacles and apprehensive of the non-realisation of his highest ideals, Fox allowed his thoughts to drift into more worldly channels. He perceived that his future hold on any executive office of distinction was likely to prove illusory, and by degrees became resolved to solidify the family fortunes while it was still in his power to do so. To be turned adrift without employment could not but mean an alteration in his whole mode of living. His expenditure left no margin for savings; and a life of retirement in the country must necessarily jeopardise the prospects of his sons, when the time came to launch them in the world. Their future must be secured at all cost.

So complete a change was by no means in accord with Fox's aspirations, though a desire for some relief from the cares of public business was no slight inducement to the course which he was contemplating. In 1757 Fox was entering upon his 53rd year. That virile activity which had been a feature of his earlier life was already on the wane. His constitution was perceptibly weakening, and we find in his letters frequent expressions of a desire for some less strenuous employment. Indeed, late in 1755, he began to develop a tendency to dropsy, which, though not in itself dangerous, required to be kept in severe check by continual riding exercise and frequent treatment.¹ With these growing disadvantages, visions of ease and affluence became day by day more alluring. Why, he asked himself, should he continue the thankless task of managing the affairs of state? Why should he

¹ Hon. Mrs Digby to Ilchester, December 25, 1755.

sacrifice his health for an ungrateful country? He would retire from active participation in government, and would seek consolation in more profitable surroundings.

Having surrendered himself to the contemplation of these dreams of cupidity, Fox cast about for the best method of securing their attainment. For his sons he had already acquired a reversion, "so that they will have something more than the little I (who cannot save money) may have to leave them."¹ For himself, the Pay Office would satisfy all future needs. The opportunity to step into it was well timed. He would be able to secure an immediate competency, and at the same time to satisfy his conscience. Always profitable, the post, during a war, was a ready road to riches. Yet he could feel that his self-effacement, however spontaneous it might have been in secret, was conducive to the establishment of a stable Administration. To insist upon his proper value in the state, or to stand up to his rival in open fight, was again to throw all parties into the melting-pot. He could convince himself, therefore, with some truth, that by accepting this minor post he was benefiting his country, and was materially assisting the King to end his days in peace.

To pass final judgment upon Fox's conduct, his case must at least be considered with due regard to the political ethics of the period. That the resources of the country should be exploited for the profit of the individual, was looked on in those days as no subject for surprise. Pelham and Pitt alone among Paymasters had refused to accept the extraneous emoluments of the office. Yet the magnitude of the change in Fox's position astounded even his own contemporaries. He had withdrawn from an honourable elevation to the seclusion of an undignified insignificance. He had taken for granted too easily the superiority of his rival, and threw up the sponge at the

¹ H. Fox to Sir J. Downing (April 10, 1757).

very commencement of the struggle. He consoled himself with the venal advantages of his new post too readily for his good name. Circumstances may be held to palliate these shortcomings. They cannot entirely rescue him from an imputation of moral abasement.

CHAPTER XXI

BEFORE embarking upon this new chapter in Fox's life, we must revert to the position of affairs in Ireland during the last decade of George II's reign, and to the new Paymaster's connection with that island. Although his name hardly finds place in her annals, Fox was in close touch with the politics of the country during the Lord-Lieutenancies of Devonshire and Bedford. His private correspondence with them, and with their Chief Secretaries, establishes the importance of his influence. It must not be forgotten, too, that his brother-in-law was a well-known figure in Irish public life. As a leading member of the "Patriot" party, Lord Kildare's weight had frequently been thrown into the scale against the Government. It fell to Fox's lot to turn his relative's activity to better use.

Ireland had for some years been passing through a period of comparative tranquillity. Even in 1745, during the Rebellion in Great Britain, the population had remained calm and undisturbed. The penal laws against Catholics, which differed only from those in England from the fact that they were directed against a large majority of the population rather than against an insignificant minority, had achieved their repressive purpose, but had driven the more active spirits to seek advancement in other climes. Members of the Catholic creed were debarred from voting, and holding any office in the state or commission in the forces. The position of the Dissenters was almost as ambiguous; although their disabilities did not prevent them from sitting in the Irish Parliament.

But as their numbers in the House of Commons seldom exceeded five or six, that body may be said to have consisted, to all intents and purposes, of members of the Established Church, and to have been little representative of the feeling of the country.

The disputes which arose between England and Ireland during those ten years were mainly of a parliamentary nature. Finance was a fruitful ground for contention. The expenses of Ireland had been defrayed after the Restoration from the hereditary revenues of the Crown, which up to 1692 had proved sufficient to pay all charges. Subsequent to that date additional taxes were voted every two years. At this same period, the procedure for the origination and transmission of Money Bills was thrashed out between the two Parliaments. Victory rested with the English House of Commons. The matter had been referred to the judges of both countries. They reported that the Chief Governor and Council might prepare the heads of Money Bills for transmission to the King and Council of England, to be returned under the Great Seal and afterwards sent to the Irish House of Commons; although the latter could claim no sole right to originate such bills.¹ Though dissatisfied with this adverse decision, the Irish Parliament seemed to accept the principle, and for seventy years raised no protest against it.

During the first half of the eighteenth century the commercial prosperity of Ireland was on the increase, notwithstanding the many drawbacks with which the community had to contend. Money was diverted into those channels by the depression of agriculture, an unfortunate state of affairs largely due to the system of land-tenure at that time in vogue. Especially remarkable was the increase in the wealth of the country after the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. In the period of five years subsequent to 1747, the National Debt of £314,000 was entirely paid off.²

¹ Ingram's *Examination of Irish History*, i. 246. ² *Ibid.*, i. 280

The question of the appropriation of surplus revenues, however, became a constant source of friction between the two Parliaments, and led to the initiation of a domestic policy which proved disastrous to the future of the island. The point was first raised in 1749, when the net surplus amounted to £220,000. As this money was largely produced by the hereditary revenues, the King claimed the right to dispose of it as he thought fit, and recommended that some portion should be used for the repayment of the Debt. At the time, the Irish Parliament appeared to acquiesce in this demand, but reverted to the subject two years later in a more insistent form. Although members agreed in the suitability of the object to which the money was to be devoted, they lodged definite protests against the King's jurisdiction over it. Again they were thwarted by a fresh decision of the judges; and passed in silence the alterations which the English Parliament inserted in the amended bill. In 1753, however, the Opposition proved strong enough to defeat a bill sent back under similar circumstances. Yet, notwithstanding this success, the Commons failed to prevent the payment of the money by royal authority, and were forced for the future to take refuge in subterfuge. If the right of appropriating the surplus for their own uses was not to be granted, at least they could make sure that no such surplus should exist in future. To compass this end, therefore, they proceeded to load the hereditary revenues with a multitude of bounties and charges, nominally for the encouragement of domestic industries. These burdens, and a constant stream of abuses in the collection of revenue, at once reduced the balances to *nil*, and within a few years again saddled the island with an ever-increasing Debt. An era of extravagance and corruption was initiated, which lasted unchecked for over twenty years.

Fox's personal interest in the country dated from a visit which he and Lady Caroline paid to the Kildares during the spring and early summer of 1750. Their stay

lasted over two months. His first impressions appear to have been favourable. "I think I can be sure that this is a rising and improving country, and Dublin seems the most populous city I was ever in except Naples."¹ Hanbury-Williams's gloomy prognostications of the effect which the Irish mode of living would have upon his friend's health were happily falsified. "I used to be afraid," he wrote, "of your living too low, and now I fear lest you should live too high. For Irish sobriety is not far off English drunkenness. Claret is their small beer, and 'tis a small claret that I do not believe will agree with you."²

At the time of Fox's visit, Lord Harrington was installed as Lord-Lieutenant; but was succeeded, in 1751, by the Duke of Dorset, who took over this responsible post for a second time. Throughout this whole period of which we speak, there were two predominant parties in the state. Both were bent on obtaining place and power, but their method of gaining their object was different. One faction, headed by Andrew Stone's brother, Archbishop George Stone, who had been raised to the Primacy of Ireland in 1747, was leagued with the responsible authorities in England, and hung on their word. The second, whose leaders were Henry Boyle, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and Anthony Malone, a lawyer of no mean reputation, posed as representing the Irish element, and sought to lessen the dependence of the Dublin Parliament upon Westminster. The animosity which Boyle bore to the Primate was augmented by the favour shewn to the latter by Lord George Sackville, Dorset's third son and Chief Secretary. To this, to the introduction of new measures, and to the unpopularity of the Lord-Lieutenant himself, was due the progressive volume of opposition which, after 1753, became a very material factor in the history of Irish politics.³

¹ H. Fox to Sir C. Hanbury-Williams, May 26, 1750 (Phillips MSS.).

² Sir C. Hanbury-Williams to H. Fox, May 1, 1750.

³ Up to May 1752 twenty-eight had been the record number of votes registered against the Government in a division (Walpole's *Letters*, iii. 93).

At the opening of the session in the winter of that year, the conflict, to which we have already alluded, arose between the two Parliaments, on the subject of the surpluses. The Irish House of Commons, elected according to custom at the commencement of the reign, was totally unrepresentative of the feelings of the country. In this instance the success of the Opposition was hailed by the public with noisy delight.

“The H. of Commons in Ireland have, in hatred of the D. of Dorset, Lord George and the Primate, set all Dublin in a flame, and rejected a point of the King’s prerogative that is essential and that cannot be given up, in relation to a Money Bill. Upon the court’s being beat by a majority of five on this question, there were 1,000 bonfires lighted at Dublin and ev’ry demonstration of affection to the opposers, and of insult and hatred to the Ld-Lt’s friends.”¹

Fox was not in accord with the action of the Speaker’s party in opposing the contention of the Crown, although his brother-in-law was one of its most active members. Indeed, the latter’s attitude was at the moment causing him much secret perturbation. Kildare had seriously offended the King by an ill-timed and ill-worded memorial, which he had presented during the summer against Dorset’s rule and the power of the Primate. This he had followed up by a bungling attempt, in October, to oppose the inclusion of the Lord-Lieutenant’s name in an address from the Commons to the King.² Finally, he arrived in England, early in January, resolved to obtain a hearing from the King, and to clear himself at the expense of the Government. But His Majesty was forewarned. Fox was desired to prevent his request for an audience; and

¹ H. Fox to Lady Hervey, December 27, 1753.

² “Lord Kildare has deceiv’d himself or been deceiv’d egregiously, and must be much mortified. I am sorry for him, but else have no good wishes for opposition anywhere” (H. Fox to Ilchester, October 20, 1753).

seems to have laid his brother-in-law's position so forcibly before him, that he was content to limit his campaign to private conversations with Pelham, Hardwicke and other ministers.¹

The defeat of the Money Bill was taken very seriously by those in authority. All servants of the Crown who had voted in the majority were deprived of their offices, and Boyle was removed from the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, a post which he held in addition to his Speakership.

This forcible method of dealing with the situation might answer for the moment. It could not bring lasting peace.

So thought Fox.

"It is our own fault if Irish affairs are not totally and perfectly well adjusted soon. But I fear they will not. The points seem to be, to support the D. of Dorset, who is frightened out of his wits and cannot be supported; and to keep up the Primate's power, which the Irish will not bear. And whilst we *opiniâtre* these things, there will be no quiet. As soon as we come to be of a temper to humour them in these, they will be, as they always have been, H.M.'s most obedient and affectionate subjects." ²

A few months later Dorset left for England. It was customary at that time for the Lord-Lieutenant to reside only one winter in every two years in his province. His stay in Ireland was contemporaneous with the session of Parliament. When the Houses were not in session, government was carried on by three Lords Justices, or Undertakers, as they came to be called.³ In this case, the Primate was included among their number. The Speaker was omitted.

No change occurred until the spring of 1755, when the incapacity of Dorset's rule became patent to all observers.

¹ Coxe's *Pelham Administration*, ii. 495, 496; *Letters of Lord Chesterfield*, iv. 101; Add. MSS. 32,734.

² H. Fox to Lady Hervey, January 23, 1754.

³ They *undertook* to carry on the Government.

Early in March an announcement was made, that Lord Hartington was to be appointed to succeed him. The new Viceroy undertook the task of controlling the rival factions with visible reluctance. He had no special desire "to pluck the thorn of Ireland out of the D. of Newcastle's side," as Pitt expressed it¹; but was constrained to accept the offer in deference to the wishes of his father, who had himself reigned in Dublin for some years. He was accompanied as Chief Secretary by Colonel Seymour Conway, himself a member of the Irish House of Commons, and brother of Lord Hertford.

In view of the unsettled state of the country, Hartington hurried over to Dublin without loss of time, omitting even the ceremony of a state entry. He was civilly received by all parties, and expressed his intention of ruling impartially, without shewing special favour to either side. He obtained specious promises of support from the Primate; and after a lengthy interview with the Speaker, came to an understanding that his party too would do nothing to disturb the public peace, if they were allowed "their full share of favour and influence."² A rumour, however, was widely circulated, as a result of this conversation, to the effect that the Primate's dismissal was foreshadowed, if indeed it had not been actually promised. The story was promptly contradicted by the Speaker and Malone, at the instance of the Lord-Lieutenant.³ But the fact that it had obtained credence, and the impossibility of leaving the Primate in the position of a Lord Justice, on account of the intense dissatisfaction which would have thereby been created in the country, prevented Hartington from returning to England, as he had originally intended.

This sensible resolution, to remain for the present in Ireland, was applauded by his advisers. His father, Cumberland, Horace Walpole, all signified their relief at his

¹ H. Fox to Hartington, May 13, 1755 (Devonshire MSS.).

² Hartington to H. Fox, May 17, 1755.

³ *Ibid.*

decision.¹ Fox was convinced that his friend could take no other course. He had already sufficient experience of Newcastle's methods, and was able to utter a warning against his Grace's assurances.

"Your Lordp must convey your judgment to the King without passing it through the medium of the Duke of Newc. or Ld Chancellr, who will colour and disguise it and lessen the force of the reasons that support it, and deal falsely and meanly by you in this as they do in ev'ry thing."²

Fox and the Duke of Devonshire were in constant confabulation. Both believed that Hardwicke was in the habit of consulting Dorset. They held the view that Hartington's appointment had been originally proposed in order to save the face of the ex-Lord-Lieutenant and to pursue his system. They therefore urged the former to exercise the utmost caution in dealing with the English Government.

Fox's comments on the chief figures upon the other side of St George's Channel are worthy of record. He believed Malone to be an honest man, and abler than either the Speaker or the Primate. Of the integrity of the two latter he was not so confident, and added a special admonition against the last-named.

"He was bred in the Dorset school, and has an intriguing, feminine understanding and nature, which are the natural and often successful enemies of such an open, unsuspecting and superior mind as yours. You must take care of him."³

Fox did all in his power to push Kildare to the front. He took every opportunity of bringing him and Hartington together. "I will use all my interest with him to give me leave to treat with your Lp separately and

¹ H. Fox to Hartington, June 2, 1755 (Devonshire MSS.).

² *Ibid.*, June 8, 1755 (Devonshire MSS.).

³ *Ibid.*

independently of the rest, and of his own popularity. If he cannot distinguish between popularity and honour, between the worst and the best guide, I am sorry for him. . . . I again repeat I will be answerable for his sincerity." ¹ The Lord-Lieutenant was quite prepared to meet Kildare half-way, and the latter, humbled by his recent rebuffs, shewed himself genuinely anxious to come to terms. In the sequel he proved himself an apt negotiator, and was able to do Hartington material service. Upon one preliminary condition Kildare laid great stress. He insisted that the Primate should not remain in authority, when the Lord-Lieutenant left the country. As soon as this point was secretly conceded, he ardently set to work to strive for a settlement; and matters were arranged largely owing to his firmness with his party. "He has told the Speaker that the offers I made him were fair and reasonable, and that he ought to accept them. . . . If they wou'd not come in, he was resolv'd to go no farther." ²

Conway had been despatched to England early in the summer to settle procedure with the home Government, and in his absence Hartington was swayed to and fro by the contending parties. First, he was influenced against the Primate; next, a wave of mistrust of the Speaker seemed to drive him to the other extreme.

Fox disclaimed any personal bias. He was for peace, but not for a mere temporary adjustment of difficulties. "You did not go to get over one sessions *tellement qu'ellement*, and then to look on to another, but to have the honour, I trust, of having settled on a lasting footing the peace and quiet of a nation." ³ This he believed was to be best effected with the assistance of the Speaker, as the representative of the popular party in the country; therefore he threw the weight of his influence into that

¹ H. Fox to Hartington, June 1, 1755.

² Hartington to H. Fox, September 7, 1755.

³ H. Fox to Hartington, June 8.

scale. His advice to Hartington was to close with Boyle, but "with dignity" keep from both factions the knowledge of his intentions as to who should be included in the Government when he left Ireland.¹

With the opening of the session, however, early in October, troubles recommenced. Hartington's doubts on the integrity of the Speaker appeared to be only too well founded. Certain sentences had been inserted, by the special request of his party, in the address of the House of Commons, which was to be presented to the King in extenuation of their recent revolt. The Lord-Lieutenant had qualms about the phraseology, but the draft, which had been sent over beforehand, received the approval of the King. Cumberland and Fox both signified their delight at the turn of affairs, and deprecated any change.² Yet, without a syllable to any one, the Speaker altered the resolution before it was moved. The words were not material, and Conway accepted them rather than raise a flame in the House.³ But the bad faith of the Speaker was unmistakable, and his action was disowned by Malone and Kildare. His treachery was adversely commented upon by his friends, and strengthened Hartington's determination to grant him no plenary powers. From that moment the Lord-Lieutenant erased him in his mind from the possible list of Lords Justices, and privately resolved, when the time came, to substitute Kildare. Another point arose—whether the latter should be entrusted with this secret. It would wreck him, thought Hartington, if divulged. Fox vouched for his brother-in-law's silence⁴; and convinced the Lord-Lieutenant,

¹ H. Fox to Hartington, August 6, 1755 (Devonshire MSS.). Hartington had been in two minds whether he should not announce that he would leave neither the Primate nor the Speaker in the position of a Lord Justice.

² *Ibid.*, September 28, 1755 (Devonshire MSS.).

³ Hartington to H. Fox, October 11, 1755.

⁴ "Ld Kildare can keep a secret, even his own, which Sr R. Walpole said hardly anybody could keep" (H. Fox to Hartington, November 12, 1755. Devonshire MSS.).

who obtained satisfactory assurances in return for his confidence.¹

Matters progressed smoothly in Parliament. Even the Money Bill raised no opposition.² The Primate remained apparently quiescent, though a series of private meetings at his house seemed to Fox no favourable portent. He was said to have boasted that his legs had been cut off, but that he would make a good fight upon his stumps.³ Coached by Newcastle, he had even professed his willingness to withdraw any claim to high office; but after-events shewed that he had no expectation of being taken at his word. The prospect, however, seemed favourable; and Hartington declared that he could look forward to a short and peaceful session.

Towards the end of November, Fox took over the seals of office, as Secretary of State for the Southern Department, and thereby commenced his official connection with the affairs of Ireland. In order to spare Newcastle's susceptibilities, it was arranged between Fox and Hartington, at the latter's suggestion, that two letters should always be written by the Lord-Lieutenant, one for his Grace's eye, the other for the Secretary's alone. The chief business discussed between the two friends during the next few months was the question of the augmentation of the Irish forces, to which reference has already been made.⁴ Hartington himself originated the proposal, in the belief that the suggestion of a grant of men towards Ireland's share in the war would, under the circumstances, be far better received by that country than a vote of money.⁵

The suggestion of new pensions upon the Irish establishment produced a slight difference of opinion between them; although Fox confessed that there might be more

¹ Hartington to H. Fox, November 1, 1755.

² *Ibid.*, November 19, 1755.

³ Kildare to H. Fox, October 11, 1755.

⁴ See *ante*, i. 315.

⁵ Devonshire to H. Fox, February 26, 1756.

objection to an increase than he realised. Devonshire, to give him the title to which he had succeeded upon his father's death early in December, strongly urged the imprudence of "lighting up afresh that fire which is not yet extinguish'd," by immoderate grants to non-residents in Ireland.¹ He had his way for the moment. The subject was too much mixed up with the recent struggle to be treated lightly. For although the Irish were bent on unlimited extravagance in order to reduce the annual surplus, they looked with suspicion and jealousy upon any outside interference, however indirect.

Early in the New Year, Devonshire sent over to England an outline of his scheme for securing the tranquillity of the country. He proposed, as we have seen, to steer a middle course between the rival parties, by appointing Kildare one of the Lords Justices. Boyle himself could be bribed to disappear from active politics with a peerage. Ponsonby would succeed him as Speaker, and Malone become Chancellor of the Exchequer. For once Fox and Newcastle were in complete agreement. But difficulties arose in obtaining the King's consent. First, His Majesty could not bring himself to overcome his dislike of Lord Kildare; and though his name was put forward by Devonshire, acting upon Fox's advice,² as a *sine qua non*, he accepted him sullenly and under protest. "H.M. was pleased to consent to it," wrote Newcastle, "but order'd me to acquaint yr Grace that it was not by choice, but as the preferable measure to that of the Speaker."³ Next, the King raised objections to the principle of the whole plan, but was finally induced to give way.

"His Majesty's consent has been obtained with diffi-

¹ Devonshire to H. Fox, December 25, 1755.

² "When you propose him as a Lord Justice, do it in a manner not to be deliberated upon, but as a matter of your own province and that you think absolutely necessary" (H. Fox to Hartington, November 25, 1755. Devonshire MSS.).

³ Newcastle to Devonshire, February 18, 1756 (Devonshire MSS.).

culty, and I cannot too much commend the D. of Newcastle's behaviour in what regards you. I followed him into the closet, where he gained the consent this morning, and His Majesty began with me. He did not like rewarding and buying enemies, &c., &c. I told H.M. that yr Grace found the opposing party the majority, and was forc'd to buy them; but that I did not look upon this as buying the Speaker, but as buying the government of Ireland into H.M.'s hands again. He said the next Speaker might behave well to you, to whom he was related so nearly, but might be as troublesome to Government hereafter as his predecessor. I then answered that I verily believed yr Grace did not intend to put the next Speaker in the Government, but to lessen the power of the employment as well as change the person. (I know this was yr Grace's intention, and I hope and believe it is so still). I fancy I did not say too much, and what I did say I thought pacified him. But I claim no merit at the D. of Newcastle's expense, for he had got his consent before. His Grace looks upon it, as I do, to be a great and thorough measure that will make a peace and a lasting one, and I heartily congratulate yr Grace upon it." ¹

The Lord-Lieutenant's stratagem proved even more successful than he had dared to anticipate. The fact that Boyle, now Earl of Shannon, had privately secured his own advancement at the expense of the popular party, raised a wave of indignation throughout the country. He was burnt in effigy in the streets of Dublin, and temporarily became a negligible factor in Irish politics. It was the case of Pulteney over again, as Fox had foreseen. "I own," he had written, "I always saw that when the Speaker had sold himself publicly, he would be in Ld Bath's situation, not only incapable himself of giving trouble, but a mark to deter others from setting up a man to give trouble, in order, like him, to be paid for leaving it off." ²

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire, January 28, 1756 (Devonshire MSS.).

² *Ibid.*, March 9, 1756 (Devonshire MSS.).

The effect of Boyle's action upon Irish politics was still more far-reaching. The patriot party was split asunder by the defection of their leader. The secrecy upon which Devonshire had so firmly insisted throughout the negotiations, had made any previous attempts at combination impossible. Many of the most considerable members of the party attached themselves forthwith to the Government. Ponsonby was able to slip into the Speakership almost unopposed. The resentment of the mob proved an important factor in the situation. Sir Arthur Gore, one of the patriot leaders, asked for the postponement of the peerage which had been the price of the withdrawal of his claim to the Speakership. He feared to be coupled by public opinion with his late chief. And so it was with Malone, who had certainly some knowledge of the negotiations with Boyle. Indeed, he had expressed his willingness to forego his professional earnings of £4,000 a year to become Chancellor of the Exchequer, if the salary of £600 should be doubled. Yet early in March he asked to be temporarily excused from taking the post, preferring to wait till the outcry in the country had subsided.

Organised resistance was momentarily at an end. Conway was able to write, that the Government seemed to set out on a new footing, and that it was once more vested in the hands of the Governor.¹ Devonshire went home to England early in May, happy and content, leaving the conduct of affairs in the hands of his three Lords Justices, Lord Bessborough, Chancellor Jocelyn and Lord Kildare. He was not fated to return. A few months later, the exigencies of English politics raised him to higher responsibilities in the state, and brought his reign in Ireland to a sudden conclusion.

The appointment of the Duke of Bedford to succeed him was, as we have already seen, largely due to Fox's influence.² But before his arrival the latter's responsi-

¹ H. Conway to H. Fox, March 2, 1756.

² See *ante*, ii. 11.

bility for affairs of Ireland had ceased. Fox was no longer in office, and activity in matters which no longer concerned him would certainly have been misconstrued by his successful rival. Although he was kept fully informed of the progress of events by his friend Richard Rigby, the new Chief Secretary, he refused to be drawn into the vortex. He repeated on more than one occasion that he had no longer sufficient knowledge of the intricacies of Irish party strife, to be able to respond to appeals for advice. Indeed, the concern which he evinced at the difficulties of the new Lord-Lieutenant seems to us closely connected with the political welfare of his brother-in-law.

The attitude adopted by Lord Kildare was not the least of the perplexities with which Bedford found himself face to face. The Lord-Lieutenant arrived in the country, in September 1757, resolved to shew equal favour to both parties. Malone had recently decided to accept the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, and thereby lowered himself in public estimation. The Primate, chafing at his loss of power, had lost no time in attempting to reinstate himself. To this end he came to an agreement with Speaker Ponsonby. Their united parties largely outnumbered that of Kildare, to whom Bedford, in order to please Fox, seemed before long inclined to shew some preference.¹

The session opened inauspiciously for the Government. The Primate and Ponsonby, contrary to their professions, threatened open opposition. The crisis was reached upon a series of resolutions of the House of Commons against pensions and other grievances. Bedford considered the language derogatory to the honour of the Crown. He refused to forward the address to England, until peremptorily ordered to do so by Pitt.² But the result of an adverse division in Dublin, in which he had the support of Kildare and Malone, and the threat of a refusal to for-

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 255.

² Williams's *Life of Pitt*, ii. 42.

ward the impending Money Bill, led to a further modification of his haughty tone.¹ Mutual recriminations became the order of the day. The overweening reliance of Kildare upon his own powers may have induced the Lord-Lieutenant to essay a trial of strength which was generally considered to have been injudicious. On the other hand, the former complained of a want of confidence upon the part of the Castle.

Fox thought some change of policy was clearly indicated.

"It is too plain that *nobody* wish'd his Grace to govern, as *ev'rybody* advis'd him to do, without a party; and there must now be some junction, for the parties, as now form'd, are so even that either will be able to obstruct Government. I think the Kildares, &c., had disadvantageous ground to fight upon, as the privilege and honour of the House were concern'd; but the reason why some left them proves too much 'they are afraid of their elections in another Parliament': that is, they are afraid of being unpopular. Is not this as much as to say, 'In opposition, against the Castle, we are ready to assist; but with the Government, when popularity is on the other side, we must beg to be excus'd'?"

"I fear Lord Kildare will be very unwilling to see that he and his cannot do in opposition to both the other parties; but from whom or in what degree he can have, or ought to desire, help, I am not a judge. But you do well to moderate him, and certainly he has no reason to complain of the Duke of Bedford." ²

A month later Fox received a private letter from Rigby.³ The situation had been in no way improved by a barren victory on Kildare's motion for an Enquiry into the management of the revenue for the past twenty

¹ Digby to H. Fox, November 15, 1757.

² H. Fox to Digby, November 21, 1757. A pathetic interest is attached to this letter. It is docketed, "Ld Digby never received it, being alas! dead ere it arriv'd." Lord Digby died on November 30, 1757.

³ R. Rigby to H. Fox, December 24, 1757.

years.¹ The latter was no nearer the accommodation with the Speaker, which Bedford had urged upon him; and absolutely declined to have anything to do with the Primate. The Lord-Lieutenant had in his mind, Rigby said, to appoint an English deputy, whereby power would be taken out of the hands of both Irish factions.² What did Fox think of the suggestion, and whom could he recommend to take the post? We have unfortunately no clue to Fox's reply. Probably it was inconclusive, for a fortnight later he wrote to Bedford, and quoted Lord Granville's opinion of the situation rather than his own. He repeated that he did not understand the state of Irish affairs sufficiently to be able to advise.³

Bedford had forwarded the proposal for a deputy to Pitt in January. It did not find favour in the eyes of the English ministers. In Rigby's opinion, they were unwilling to give up the Primate so far.⁴ Yet to the last Bedford clung to his scheme, which seemed to him to promise the best results.

"The appointment of a Lord Deputy, or the continual residence of the Lord-Lieutenant here, appear to me to be the only possible methods of retrieving things from the state of confusion they are now in, and for restoring English authority in Ireland. The continual residence of the Lord-Lieutenant seems impossible for any one on account of the expense; and, as for myself, I would not be banished from home for three years upon any consideration whatsoever. Nothing then remains upon the principle of my plan, but the appointing of a Lord Deputy, and as I would willingly agree to the making it up to

¹ The motion was rendered ineffective by the constitution of the Committee which was appointed by ballot to deal with the matter. Bedford had refused to become a principal in the Enquiry, but did not oppose it (R. Rigby to H. Fox, December 10, 1757).

² Kildare had himself recommended this plan to Bedford, but Rigby doubted whether he was in earnest.

³ H. Fox to Bedford, January 7, 1758 (*Bedford Corres.*, ii. 318).

⁴ R. Rigby to H. Fox, January 20, 1758.

£4,000 a year, I can make no doubt of finding a proper person willing to accept it." ¹

Pitt's long-deferred reply was received in the early days of February. Bedford could read between the lines that he was not to have his own way. He thereupon set about to attempt a junction of all parties. The Primate's advances were becoming more and more marked. He professed himself ready, indeed anxious, to act with Kildare. He seemed prepared even to give up the Speaker. But Kildare remained adamant, and frustrated all accommodation by his obstinacy. Rigby, mindful of his promises to Fox, was at his wits' end to know what to do. Could not Fox, he wrote, make one final effort to save his friend? ² A letter from him might open Kildare's eyes to the abyss which yawned at his feet. Friends were falling away right and left. Even Lord Shannon had been suborned by the Primate, and had expressed his willingness to desert to the enemy.

Fox fully agreed that Kildare was not behaving wisely, but set about the task with many misgivings. His hopes of success were slender; for Kildare had recently spoken out his mind, and had told him frankly that he was too far away to be able to understand the real position. Indeed, for six weeks past, neither Lord nor Lady Kildare had so much as mentioned politics in their letters. ³

Fox's appeal was characteristic.

"February 25, 1758.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I trust your Lordship will excuse me for writing, because I could not excuse myself if I did not write to

¹ Bedford to H. Fox, January 26, 1758. These remarks upon the expense of the office bear out Walpole's statement, that the Lord-Lieutenant and his Chief Secretary looked to their second year of office, when they were absent, to recoup themselves for their initial disbursements (*Memoirs*, ii. 279).

² R. Rigby to H. Fox, February 14, 1758.

³ H. Fox to Bedford, February 3, 1758 (draft).

you upon a conjuncture so critical to your Lordship, as that the acting one way or the other in it will probably determine the rest of your publick life, to which, happy as you are in private life, I know you cannot be indifferent. It is very true that I do not understand Irish politicks, that is, that I cannot at all account for what happens there, from connexions and views and talents of the men who may have been the authors of the strange events of this session. But, my dear Lord, I know some facts. I know of a certainty that you are the man in Ireland whom the Lord-Lieutenant wishes best to ; perhaps the only man of whose sincerity he has any opinion. Of yours he has the highest, and would have been pleas'd with nothing so much as to govern by you exclusively. He thinks that impossible. I know the Primate and Ponsonby will give him any terms if he will leave them in Government, joining whomever he shall think fit with them. I know Lord Shannon has left you. (This is a secret trusted to your honour, but upon my honour I know it to be true.) I am told (I do not *know*) that more of your present friends will leave you. I know that it is already said here that you will refuse all accommodation, and therefore that all the troubles, if any ensue, are to be laid at the E. of Kildare's door.

" Now, my dear Lord, what will be the consequence of your refusal to join on any terms? Will it not be that the Primate, Speaker, Lord Shannon and perhaps some others, will make Government strong in the next session, and leave your Lordship at the head of a small minority in the House of Commons, without a man who can speak in it, unless Malone sticks by you ; of whom I say nothing, because I know nothing. You know him better than anybody. But what can your Lordship do to prevent this triumph of your enemys? Suppose your Lordship should take the D. of Bedford's advice with the terms he offers, that is, accept of being in the Government, bringing in with you suppose Malone, or Malone and Shannon (who will join with any man to be in the Government, but when in it, may perhaps like to side with yr Lordship and Malone) : you may add the Chancellor, and have five. But at all events, coming in in any of these shapes will have the appearance of a conquest rather than a yielding ;

and the predilection of the Ld-Lt to your Lordship, and the just dislike he has to your enemies, will secure to you all there is in it of reality.

“ But you have declar’d you never would be in Government with the Primate. Political resolutions are not, my Lord, like promises, never to be departed from. They are not points of honour, but should change as the circumstances which caus’d them to vary. Pitt determin’d never to act in Administration with the D. of Newcastle, persisted in it till he found that a Ministry would, if he persisted longer, be form’d without him, and then join’d ; and, by joining, triumphs over his Grace. And yet Pitt had Leicester House and a whole party in Parlt and an universal cry in the City and country to have supported him in opposition. And in whatever else he is thought by many not the wise or honest man he would appear, I never heard any man reproach him with *this* change of resolution.

“ I have said, my dear Lord, enough, if what I say can have any effect ; too much, if it is to have none. I will only then recapitulate, and in a few words say that a Government will be, if you don’t take care, form’d without you, with which so many of your friends will join against you, that you will not be able to oppose it. If you could, you would be blam’d by all men who wish the peace of the country ; if you cannot, you will be look’d upon by all mankind in the light I should be sorry to see you in. And finding yourself blam’d by your friends, you will, which is the worst of all, soon blame yourself. I am the more sure of what will be said of your conduct, because your refusing on any terms to be in the Government with the Primate, and that the Government is to be form’d without you is already the news here ; and even since I began this letter I have again heard your Lordship much blam’d upon that supposition.

“ The affection and love for you which has dictated this letter, will, I am persuaded, make ev’ry apology for it unnecessary.”

To Rigby Fox wrote that his letter contained, “ so much kindness in it as must engage his attention, and so much strength of argument as should induce convic-

tion." But he supposed it would not. "*I won't, because I won't*, is a very bad species of reasoning, but generally the hardest to overturn of any."¹

His forecast of the effect produced by his efforts proved correct. Kildare declined to stir from the attitude which he had adopted. It was impossible for him, he wrote, to act in the Government with a man whom he had formerly represented to the King in so sordid a light, without giving himself the lie. The duties of a Lord Justice were not wonderfully tempting. He would do nothing that could strain his "notions of honour." And further, he was unable to look upon Bedford's conduct towards him in the favourable light in which Fox represented it. He was content to stand down, even if his action should end his political career.²

Kildare had no inclination to opposition, and therefore temporarily retired from the public stage. He was "most exceedingly blam'd by his own party,"³ but seems to have been guided by a perfectly sincere conviction of right and wrong. The Primate, the Speaker and Lord Shannon took their places as Lords Justices, when Bedford left the country. Peace was restored, and an adequate majority in the Commons secured to carry on the King's business, without the promise of a single place, pension or peerage.

Upon one further episode connected with Bedford's Viceroyalty we may here shortly touch, although it properly belongs to the opening months of George III's reign. Fox was frequently consulted, but took no active part in a controversy, which to him had at least the merit of securing one of the wishes nearest to his heart—a step in the peerage for his brother-in-law. He relates the circumstances at some length in his political sketch of the years 1760–3, to which we shall have frequent occasion to recur.⁴

¹ H. Fox to R. Rigby, February 25, 1758.

² Kildare to H. Fox, March 9, 1758.

³ R. Rigby to H. Fox, March 9, 1758.

⁴ *Fox's Memoir*, printed in *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox*,

We have already alluded to the fact that the Irish Parliament was wont to sit unaltered through the reign of each successive sovereign. Under Poyning's Law the ostensible reason for the summons of a new Parliament, after a dissolution, was the transmission by the Irish Privy Council of heads of two or more bills, and among them of a Money Bill, to be examined and proved by a Committee of the English Privy Council.

At the end of 1760, the Lords Justices sent over the heads of two trifling bills. No Money Bill was included. They asked that Parliament should be called together solely upon those grounds. Their action was in effect to reopen that controversy which had lain dormant since the reign of William III. The reason put forward for a departure from the existing custom, of which they allowed the "usage and legality,"¹ was that the people of Ireland would be in a ferment if a Money Bill were sent, after the disturbances of the previous years; and that as Supply had already been granted till Christmas 1761, there was no occasion for any further bill.² The matter was discussed by the Cabinet in London at a meeting on December 2, at which the Lord-Lieutenant himself was present. He strongly urged the Government to insist upon the customary observances, and carried his point against Pitt, who alone shewed dissent. The latter did not divide the meeting, but abstained from signing the letter of remonstrance which was sent over next day from the Privy Council.

Pitt's attitude made a great impression in Dublin, and stiffened the backs of the recalcitrant Lords Justices, who professed to see in it a sign that the English Government would not insist upon the terms of their letter. The position was certainly a curious one. The Primate,

i. 17, 34. See also Walpole's *Memoirs of George III*, i. 31; Lecky's *History of Ireland*, iii. 60.

¹ R. Rigby to H. Fox, January 8, 1761.

² Kildare to H. Fox, December 18, 1761.

a champion of the prerogative of the Crown in former disputes, was now leading the popular party. Pitt, the real head of the state, was to be found aiding and abetting the malcontents against the requirements of his own Government. Bedford, to whose unpopularity, and to that of his Chief Secretary, this demonstration was perhaps largely due, was burnt in effigy in the streets of Dublin, and was warned not to cross the Channel again at his peril. Yet his services were singled out by the King for special acknowledgment. Kildare's position was a further proof of the topsy-turvy conditions which prevailed. He shewed himself bitterly opposed to the tricks of his former associates, and upon the arrival of the letter from the English Privy Council, took upon himself to propose in Council that a Bill of Supply should be prepared, in accordance with the wishes therein expressed.

Further correspondence of an acrimonious nature passed between the Lords Justices and the Lord-Lieutenant, and occasioned a somewhat lengthy delay. During this time Kildare kept Fox fully informed of all that occurred. The latter favoured strong measures. He forwarded a suggestion to Bedford, with copies of the letters which he had received from his brother-in-law, that the immediate removal of the Primate from both the Regency and the Privy Council would have a salutary effect upon the ill-disposed.¹ His Grace replied that, though Fox's "politics" were "spirited and must be carried into execution in part," he thought that the Lords Justices and Council should be given time to realise the error of their ways. He betrayed his personal feelings, by adding that a measure of this kind might lead to his own return to Ireland, a step against which he had fully made up his mind.²

Kildare's bill was discussed by the Irish Privy Council

¹ H. Fox to Bedford, December 30, 1760 (*Bedford Corres.* ii. 428).

² Bedford to H. Fox, December 31, 1760.

on January 24, and was rejected by 15 votes to 9.¹ In its place, a plan for raising the money already voted was sent over to England. Bedford wished to reject this artifice ; and was supported by the King and Bute. But the Council, influenced by Mansfield, decided against him. They accepted the compromise, and returned the measure with orders to call a new Parliament.

To Fox's great delight, his brother-in-law's staunchness found its due reward. At Bedford's request the King consented to raise Kildare to an Irish marquisate, with the further promise of a dukedom, whenever any peerages of that degree were to be created.²

¹ Kildare to H. Fox, January 24, 1761.

² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 34 ; *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 5.

CHAPTER XXII

THE office of Paymaster was first instituted by Charles II after the Restoration. The army was at that time exclusively paid for by the King out of his privy purse, and the appointment was therefore in his personal gift. Sir Stephen Fox, who was the first occupant of the post, received a salary of £400 a year.¹ But as Charles was always short of ready money, Sir Stephen undertook to furnish the necessary funds week by week, charging a commission of one shilling in the pound. Originally this arrangement appears to have been a private one between him and the army, for he states that he was "offered more by ye chiefe officers, who could not prevail with any other person or persons to undertake it evin at 18d p. £." The statement, that he was allowed 8 per cent. on all moneys which were not refunded to him at the end of four months, is not in accord with his own account of the transaction.

"In producing his accts before ye Cormission of Accts, appointed by Act of Parlement in ye year 1668, that sate at Brooke house, the Paymaster did observe that soe vast a sume as above 400,000£ was reced many months after paymt was made to ye forces without any charge to ye publique, that agreemt of 12d in ye pd makeing of it good ; insoemuch that ye said Cormisrs and ptcularly ye honoble Wm Parepoint and Sr Wm Turner, Lord Mayor of London, did report that they never mett wth soe advantaigous a contract to the publique at any time,

¹ Fortescue's *History of the British Army*, i. 312.

² Sir Stephen Fox's "Recollections relating to my Self since the Restoration as by six pages," 1712 (Melbury MSS.).

which could never be carry'd on by any other undertakers when tryall was made."

So pleased was the King with the arrangement that he allowed Sir Stephen Fox to resign in favour of his son, Charles. The latter "carry'd it on with soe great satisfaction, yt he was never complained of." But when the office was taken from him and given to Lord Ranelagh in 1689, the system was changed. "His Lordship could not carry on ye undertakeing part, soe that the charge thereof over and above ye 12d, which continued, was to fall upon the Government."

In future, therefore, the commission, or poundage as it was called, deducted from the soldiers' pay, no longer found its way into the pockets of the Paymaster, as he had ceased to advance the money, but remained in the royal treasury.

In 1702, Lord Ranelagh was dismissed from the Pay Office for misappropriating the public money—a charge brought against him by the Committee of Public Accounts; and in the following year, a clause was inserted in the Mutiny Act, enforcing the regularity of payments to the troops. Some such control over the Paymaster had become very necessary, as the pay of the army had been often months in arrear since the Foxs vacated the office. At the same time, it was divided, one Paymaster being appointed for the troops at home, another for those abroad.¹

During the next fifty years innovations of various kinds crept into the practices of the office. Fundamentally it remained unchanged—an independent post, forwarding the requisitions of the War Office to the Treasury, and paying out cash as required. Upon the latter department, however, it was to some extent dependent, for the Pay accounts were nominally open at all times to the

¹ Sir Stephen Fox's "Recollections relating to my Self, etc." "John How, Esqr. was appointed to be paymr of ye Gardes and Home Forces, and Mr Fox to be paymaster of all ye forin troops in Her Maties pay."

scrutiny of the Treasury officials. Yet in practice this function was never exercised, except in connection with the final settlement of the Paymaster's balances, which only took place some years after his retirement. Even the Paymaster's periodical estimates for the requirements of the army were accepted without close examination. In consequence of this system, or rather want of system, it is not surprising to find that the sums of public money standing to the credit of the Paymaster were at times very great. These it had become the custom for him to re-lend to the Government, if he wished to do so, and to place the interest to his own credit. He was further permitted to retain the balance of the funds entrusted to his care after retirement from office, until such a time as his accounts were finally made up.

The Paymaster reaped the advantage of an additional source of income—the subsidies paid to foreign countries. It was part of his duties to transmit these to their destination; but he was allowed to remunerate himself with a half per cent. of their capital value. The exaction was looked upon as such a matter of course, that when Pitt refused to accept the deduction in the case of a subsidy to the King of Sardinia, the latter actually proposed to make him the present of an equivalent sum.¹ Pitt had absolutely refused these percentages on subsidies, following the example of Henry Pelham, who, it appears, had also declined to fill his pockets by this method.² Pitt had also placed the moneys advanced to him for the army in the Bank of England, where they lay idle until the time came for their use.

Every credit must be given to Pitt and Pelham for their unwillingness to accept profits, which, by custom, were their lawful perquisites. Their self-denial was far in advance of that period of loose financial and political morality. It would be unfair, however, to censure all

¹ Almon's *Anecdotes of Lord Chatham*, i. 185.

² Lord Rosebery's *Chatham*, p. 256.

those who did not pursue the same enlightened course. At that time the profits of the Pay Office were looked upon as legitimate spoil, to which the fortunate possessor of the post had every right. The prize was well known to be the most lucrative in the state; and as yet no one had raised a voice against the anomalies which were involved in the recognition of the system. If the Paymaster chose to invest surpluses in Government funds, it was regarded as his own affair. He was liable for the capital sums, and might be called on to make good any deficiencies. It was only just beginning to dawn on a few more enlightened than their fellows, that the individual had no prescriptive right to interest on state money, and it is probable that Pitt's conduct influenced many, who had never up to then given the matter a moment's thought. Yet, in common fairness, we must judge our forefathers in the light of their own times; and if their contemporaries thought fit to wink at abuses which our generation would not for one moment tolerate, we have no right to pass sentence under any code but their own.

This was the nature of the new duties and obligations which Fox had taken upon himself. The change was welcome. It was a relief to him to feel settled in a haven of rest, after the recent years of turmoil which he had undergone. "I am Paymaster," he wrote to his friend, Hanbury-Williams, on July 6, "which I like better than any post I could have had; and I am *indeed*, not in name only, no minister."¹ To Cumberland, who had written his congratulations, adding that, in his opinion, Fox should still continue to sign himself, as he had once done to his brother, *lucky Harry Fox*,² he replied, in a vein of ecstatic bliss:

"I am as happy, Sir (I thank you for it), as an Englishman in these times can be, and I would not for any con-

¹ Phillips MSS.

² Cumberland to H. Fox, July 1757.

sideration think that I should ever come to court and into ministry again. Indeed, Sir, you shall see that I am truly sensible of my own happiness, and I will go much further than Your Royal Highness do's in describing it." ¹

Fox felt that he would at last have leisure to attend to his suburban residence, which he had in his mind to purchase, when funds allowed. He could superintend the education of his boys. He would nurse his own ailments, accompany Lady Caroline on her annual pilgrimage to Bath, make lengthy visits to his brother in the country, and accomplish the hundred and one things which had been incompatible with the responsibilities of high office.

Two out of Fox's three boys, to whose future welfare he was devoting such forethought, were now at school. Stephen had gone to Eton in February 1756, and was soon "very jolly" there.² About the same time, apparently by his own wish,³ Charles, at the age of seven, was sent to the school of Monsieur Pampellonne at Wandsworth, where his cousin, Stavordale,⁴ Lord Ilchester's eldest son, was already installed. The rivalry between the two boys rejoiced the doting father's heart.

"There is at present a great vying between Lord Stavordale and Charles. Your son intends, if possible, to recover the place he has lost as to making Latin, in which mine is got before him; and mine is determined he shall not. This do's Lord Stavordale good, but Mr Davis seems pretty sure that Lord Stavordale's ambition (as he calls it) will not be durable, and that Charles's will.

¹ H. Fox to Cumberland, August 5, 1757.

² H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, February 16, 1756.

³ "Charles determines to go to Wandsworth." He had the choice of doing so, or remaining at home until of proper age for Eton (*Memorials and Corres. of C. J. Fox*, i. 7).

⁴ Henry Thomas, afterwards 2nd Earl of Ilchester, was born in 1747. By the autumn of 1757 we find that his brother, the Hon. Stephen Fox, born in 1751, had also been sent to the same school. At that time it seems to have been in the hands of Pampellonne's widow, with Mr Davis as senior master.

It seems Charles has more emulation than any boy almost ever had, and the pains he now takes that he may get into the 4th form next year at Eton as young as Faulkner now is, who is just got there, is surprizing.”¹

So keen was the youthful prodigy, when a week later he was to be sent home for a few days, owing to illness, that he would not consent to come away till his master had set him “a task,” in order that he might overtake his cousin in grammar !

But while Henry Fox was lazily pluming himself upon the prowess of his offspring, and was peacefully planning autumn campaigns in the west against the partridges and pheasants upon his brother's estates, all was not well on the Continent. Frederick's victory over the Austrians at Prague in May had temporarily relieved the pressure upon him ; but his defeat at Kolin seven weeks later rendered his position more desperate than ever. Just the same moment, too, Cumberland, whose troops numbered a bare half of those of his opponent, D'Estrées, and consisted entirely of Hanoverians, Hessians and North-German mercenaries, was deprived of his handiest means of communication with England. The port of Emden at the mouth of the Ems, was captured by a French *coup-de-main*. The Duke recognised the disproportionate superiority of his adversary, and made little effort to check his advance. He retreated across the Weser, but was brought to battle at Hastenbeck on July 26. Worsted in the combat he was compelled to fall back in the direction of Stade, far away upon the river Elbe, leaving Hanover open to the invading hordes.

Fox's interest in these proceedings, for which, divested of Cabinet rank, he had no responsibility, was stimulated by the misfortunes of his patron and friend. Indeed, his personal assistance was soon to be urgently needed by the Duke in the hour of trial ; for Cumberland's next step was destined to bring him into serious conflict with his

¹ H. Fox to Ilchester, August 5, 1757

father and with the Government. The French overran Hanover, and advanced as far as the capital of that State. There, for some weeks, they tarried. Richelieu, fresh from his successes at Minorca, had superseded D'Estrées, whose removal was due to an intrigue at the court of Versailles. The dilatory tactics of the new commander were the probable cause of Cumberland's salvation. When he finally made up his mind to advance, he met little resistance from the Duke's army, which fell back to within twenty miles of Stade. From thence Cumberland was able to thrust his opponents back some miles by a counterstroke; and with the armies in this position the Convention of Klosterzeven was concluded on September 5, whereby the troops of Hesse, Brunswick and Gotha were to be disbanded in their own States, half of the Hanoverians were to pass beyond the Elbe, and the remainder to be interned in cantonments round Stade.

To offer an adequate explanation of this inglorious treaty, we must revert for a moment to Frederick's relations with the new Government in England. In his despair at the result of the battle of Kolin, the Prussian King had implored Pitt to send a fleet to the Baltic; and his entreaties were supplemented by Cumberland's appeal for more troops, to which the Cabinet, instigated by the King, seemed inclined to turn a sympathetic ear. But Pitt was adamant. The promise of a subsidy was his only reply,¹ and this, at the moment, was not what Frederick required. Pitt had no ships to spare from their more necessary duties, and destined all available troops for a descent on the French coast, an expedition designed to assist the position in Germany by relieving the French pressure there. George was therefore disappointed in his hope of saving his beloved Hanover from impending devastation. He feared too that the Duchies of Verden and Bremen might be restored to Sweden, their former owner. And so, without the knowledge of his ministers,

¹ *Grenville Papers*, i. 206.

he embarked upon a secret negotiation, through the agency of the King of Denmark, whose Ambassador, Count Lynar, was actually instrumental in concluding the Convention. Cumberland received definite instructions for dealing with the situation on these lines.

Frederick was first to get wind of his uncle's underhand move, and lost no time in reporting it to the British Government. They, in their turn, asked explanations. The King totally disavowed the proceedings, and quailing before the firmness of their attitude, prepared a fresh set of orders for his son. But his change of purpose came too late: the news of the treaty reached England before the letter was even despatched.

In his haste to cover his tracks, the old King entered upon a course of bluster and prevarication. He disclaimed knowledge of Cumberland's negotiations with Richelieu, and declared that his instructions had been overstepped. In the attempt to prove his good faith, he wrote a letter to Cumberland, which he caused to be circulated to the courts of Europe.

"Therein he tells him how much he disapproves of the Convention. That tho' he, the King, had been inclined to treat, it was only on condition that his country should be immediately restored, and that the Landgrave of Hesse, the D. of Wolfenbuttel, etc., should have perfect security, both as to their troops and as to their dominions. That by the late treaty all these points were entirely given up, and that the terms would have been shameful even if half his army had been cut to pieces. He concludes with an order to return as soon as possible. . . . I also understood that a disavowing letter had been sent to the King of Prussia."¹

There seems little doubt that King George sacrificed his son to save his own good name. He counted upon Cumberland's sense of filial duty to disguise the true facts. Nor was he disappointed.

¹ Waldegrave to H. Fox, September 27, 1757.

"Be assured, my Lord, that, as H.M. is his accuser, there is more danger of the Duke's wanting spirit than of his wanting temper. My heart bleeds for him; for tho' I never heard one word from him or any belonging to him concerning this Convention, yet I am certain that if ought besides absolute necessity led H.R.Hss to it, it must have been the desire of pleasing the King. His disappointment and his affliction will be extreme. H.M. owns he was for treating. Now, my Lord, how would terms a little better for the sovereigns of Hanover, Cassel and Brunswick have mended this matter? The mischief of this Convention is that it lets M. Richelieu's army loose upon the K. of Prussia this campaign, which would have been equally the case had the terms for those Princes been ever so good; and which case is of so fatal consequence, that as nothing but necessity could justify it, so nothing else doubtless occasion'd this measure."¹

Nothing can be more convincing than Fox's account of the actual instructions received by the Duke.

"H.R.H this morning showed me the King's letters, which are not full powers only, but directions to prevent the army from becoming prisoners of war at any rate, and to sign a treaty for that purpose if necessary, without waiting for any formality or further directions from hence whatever; and Munchausen told M. D'Abreu the amount of the treaty, as to what would be concluded, four days before it came."²

His view is corroborated by the opinion of the Cabinet, before whom Munchausen was ordered to lay the documents in question. They were completely satisfied, but in the opposite sense to that which the King intended. And Pitt, who certainly had no reason to back up Cumberland, replied, "But *full powers*, Sir, very *full powers*," to His Majesty's statement that he had given no orders to his son for the treaty.³

In further extenuation of the Duke's action, it may be

¹ H. Fox to Waldegrave, October 2, 1757 (draft).

² H. Fox to Bedford, October 12, 1757 (draft).

³ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 249.

stated that the position of the army at Stade was said to have been untenable, and that a vigorous offensive from Richelieu would probably have driven it into the sea.¹ In fact, it came as a surprise to Cumberland that such favourable terms had been obtainable.²

The King's reception of the Duke, of whom he had spoken to Newcastle as "his rascally son" and said that his blood was "tainted," was in keeping with the virulence of his earlier abuse.³ Cumberland arrived on the evening of October 11, and found Fox awaiting him with all the information which he had been able to collect. He had no word with him alone, and dismissed him with the assurance that he had written orders in his pocket for everything that he had done.

Early next morning, Fox was again summoned to the Duke's presence. There he heard the events of the preceding evening. He was told how Cumberland had gone to Princess Amelia's apartments, where the King was playing cards, and had been ill received by him.⁴ How later, when cards were over, he went to Lady Yarmouth, and requested her to convey to His Majesty his unalterable resolution to surrender all his employments, and even the command of his regiment.

This was the only course which Fox had thought open to his patron.

"After the letters the King has wrote I think the Duke's case without remedy, and that he has nothing to

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 249.

² This was Napoleon's view of the position (*Stanhope*, iv. 175).

³ Newcastle to Hardwicke, October 8, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,874). His Majesty made a new will on October 6, in which he revoked his legacies to the Duke. Yet, in another of 1759, he declared that "it was for no fault he had to find with him or ill opinion conceived of him, but from the exigencies of war which required that money for the *caisse militaire*" (Fox's *Memoir*, p. 10).

⁴ Fox was given no details of what had occurred. Walpole relates that the King would not speak to his son, but said aloud, "Here is my son, who has ruined me and disgraced himself" (*Memoirs*, ii. 249). George himself told Newcastle that the interview lasted four minutes (Newcastle to Hardwicke, October 12, 1757. Add. MSS. 32,868).

do but respectfully and yet firmly assert that he acted with the best intentions, and to desire so as to obtain leave by resigning his commissions to put himself out of the way of again incurring H.M.'s displeasure. This is my opinion, but perhaps it ought not to be my advice."¹

Waldegrave and Devonshire both declared themselves strongly opposed to this move. It was certainly not to Fox's personal interest that it should be made. "The worst that can happen is that, the Duke render'd quite insignificant, I shall be esteem'd so too, and they may dispose of me as they please and take my place away for a friend of their own. And yet I think that can hardly happen in this reign. In the next, I always imagined it would, but not at all the more likely for this."² He was fortunately spared any responsibility in the matter. "The Duke does not know my opinion; he has been so kind as not to ask it."³

King George was profoundly disturbed by the turn which events were taking. He ordered the Cabinet to wait on Cumberland during the morning; and sent Devonshire to him to implore him at least to retain his regiment of Guards. The Duke utterly refused to reconsider his decision. He told Conway that as he knew that the King would do nothing to justify his conduct, he must do all he could to justify himself. He obeyed his father's orders so far as to shew himself at court, but spent all his time in retirement at Windsor.

"I met H.R.H. going a private man to Windsor on Sunday; he had left his cockade and even his red coat behind."⁴

¹ H. Fox to Waldegrave, October 2, 1757.

² H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, October 2, 1757.

³ H. Fox to Bedford, October 12, 1757.

⁴ H. Fox to Ilchester, 1757. We have dealt with this episode at some length, though Fox is only indirectly affected by it, because of the light which it throws on his relations with Cumberland, in view of their subsequent quarrel; and because of the fact that no responsibility can be laid at his door for the Duke's attitude at this time.

The Convention became a dead letter. The Cabinet were spared the onus of repudiating it—a course which they were seriously contemplating—by the action of the French in disarming the Hessian troops, contrary to the terms of the treaty. The Hanoverians were re-formed, and taken into English pay, under the leadership of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. Lord Ligonier succeeded the Duke as Commander-in-Chief.

The year ended for King Frederick in a blaze of glory. The victories of Rosbach and Leuthen instilled fresh determination into the hearts of his soldiers, and a British subsidy of £670,000 refilled his empty coffers. For this he was indebted to Pitt, who, bent on his new war policy, was heedless of his former denunciation of contributions to foreign powers.

Fortunately, when the time came for the opening of the new session, no one was to be found to cavil at Pitt's proposals. Notwithstanding the fiasco of an attack upon Rochefort, he had improved his position to an almost miraculous extent in the short time at his disposal. The firmness of his attitude towards Cumberland had stifled any tendency to secret opposition from that quarter. Fox cynically likened Pitt's expeditions against the French coast to breaking windows with guineas¹; but expressed himself content with his successful rival's conduct of affairs. "Pitt is sole minister (and I am glad of it), not by having gained the King, but by the entire submission of Lord Hardwicke and the Duke of Newcastle. I hear he is determined to push the King of Prussia's cause to the utmost, and not to talk of what war shall cost next year."² Further, he told his friend Hamilton that Pitt would well deserve his victory over him, if he could extricate the country and save it from ruin.³

One special act of kindness during the summer to "an

¹ *Letters of Lord Chesterfield*, iv. 284.

² H. Fox to Bedford, October 12, 1757.

³ *Life of Lord Shelburne*, i. 78.

old and sincere friend " must receive a passing glance. Fox implored Newcastle to intercede with the King for General Fowke, the disgraced Governor of Gibraltar, who had " no ill intention mixed with his unfortunate conduct. . . . He does not ask for superfluous but necessary income ; and without H.M.'s bounty he must really starve. He has not a shilling in the world." ¹ As no further reference to his case can be found, it is to be hoped that Fox's kindly intervention enabled the veteran to spend his remaining years in comfort.

We need devote little time to the unsuccessful descent upon Rochefort, on the French coast, with the Enquiry and court-martial which followed in its train. Nor need we relate the incidents of the riots which arose from the enforcement of the new Militia Bill. Parliament met on December 1. Fox was not present, owing to the sudden and untimely death of his favourite nephew, Edward, Lord Digby, whose claims to an Irish earldom he had been pressing up to the eve of that lamentable event. Fox's own health had wonderfully improved in the country. Rigby wrote that it had been reported to him that " Squire Fox " had ridden himself " into a perfect state of health and a perfect cure of ambition." ²

Charles Fox had joined his brother at Eton in the late summer or autumn of 1758. The welfare of the boys was a constant source of anxiety to their parents. " Whenever you think London or Holland House better for Charles than Eton," wrote Fox to his wife, " be assured I shall like it. There is no comparison to be made between health and learning ; besides that I am sure enough for him of the latter. I wish to God I were so of the former." ³ Lady Caroline or her husband constantly paid flying visits to the school. On one occasion, Fox recorded that he had partaken with the two boys of a dinner which Ste. had

¹ H. Fox to Newcastle, July 20, 1757 (Add. MSS. 32,872).

² R. Rigby to H. Fox, October 30, 1757.

³ September 30, 1758.

"bespoke from the Christopher." Kildare's sons, Offaly and his brother, were also of the party. Ste. had been unwell; but as he ordered, "boil'd mutton and broth, 3 large fowls, and a leg of mutton roasted, and eat heartily of all," even the fond parent thought that there was no cause for serious alarm.¹ A few days later we catch a glimpse of the youngest-born, in a letter to Lady Caroline, who was away at Bath.

"I find Harry lame, only since noon to-day. Nurse says it is a growing pain, and seems in none herself about him. He is certainly the best-humour'd boy that ever was, for he can't walk nor set his right foot to the ground without making wry faces, and then says, 'Me can't stand, but me can kneel upon cushion and peep at the pictures, you know.' And so he do's, and you wrong his understanding much in that point, for he explain'd them all to Agatha, and joked about them all with Fannen. They were Hogarth's."

A curious picture-book, surely, for a child barely four years old!

Charles's views on the worries of existence, at this early stage of his career, must not go unrecorded.

"That odd dog Charles said, with a smile, he wish'd his life was at end. I ask'd the reason. 'Why,' says he, 'it is a troublesome affair, and one wishes one had this thing or that thing, and then one is not the happier; and then one wishes for another thing, and one's very sorry if one don't get it, and it do's not make one happy if one do's.' These were his words, and all in his merry, odd, good-humoured way."²

For Fox, sorrow followed sorrow. The loss of his nephew was soon supplemented by that of Mrs Strangeways-Horner, who died on February 11, at Melbury. For some years past their intimacy had been confined to

¹ H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, November 20, 1758.

² *Ibid.*, November 28, 1758.

an intermittent exchange of letters; for the old lady had long ceased to leave her home in Dorset. In memory of their past friendship she left him, by her will, her Wiltshire estate of Foxley. During the preceding autumn, Hanbury-Williams, Fox's former boon companion and regular correspondent, had returned from Russia, broken in mind and body. Fits of deep-seated melancholy became sufficiently marked to necessitate periods of confinement; and although the intervals between his attacks were lucid enough, and the illness at one time gave promise of yielding to treatment, his death in November 1759 could only be regarded as a merciful ending to his sufferings.

But this was not all. Fox's "most intimate and dear friend from childhood,"¹ Marlborough, died of fever at Munster on October 20, 1758. He served as Commander of the land forces in the abortive expedition to St Malo, but returned home disgusted with the prospect of similar attempts, and applied to be sent to Germany. Thither he was despatched at the end of July, in charge of the British troops who were to serve there under the command of Prince Ferdinand, but died within three months.² Fox was much upset by this misfortune. A change of scene, he thought, might prevent his "continual thinking" of his lost friend.

"I came here in hopes that the journey and a little Bath water might make me sleep better than, since I heard of his death, I have been able to do. I have not succeeded yet. Methinks the *anni recedentes* have par-

¹ Melbury Game Books. A curious inscription on the back of his portrait by Richardson, at Holland House, testifies to the depth of Fox's affection. ". . . Lord Holland loved and still loves his friend Charles Spencer better than any man living. The Duke of Ormond said he would not change his dead son Lord Ossory, nor would Lord Holland change his dead friend the Duke of Marlborough, for any man now living."

² It was found after death that his lungs were seriously affected; and the doctors stated that in any case he could not have lived more than a year (J. Calcraft to H. Fox, November 14, 1758).

ticular disadvantage on these sad occasions. When we are younger, we dissipate, we have new views, new scenes, arising; and new friendships may make us forget the former and have time to become old, confirm'd and valuable. At my age, life of itself grows ev'ry day less palatable, without such horrid ingredients to embitter and make it almost insupportable." ¹

The sessions of 1758 and 1759 were uneventful. Fox was seldom in his place in the Commons; except when the army vote was down for discussion, "when the Paymaster, though there will be not a word spoken, must not be absent." He was reported to be superintending alterations to the grounds at Holland House.² Pitt also only deigned to shed the light of his countenance upon the House twice during the winter after the formation of his Government. Fox refers to his speech on the Habeas Corpus Bill, a measure introduced by Pratt, the Attorney-General, with Pitt's full approval, in order to broaden the basis of the Act.

"The Lord Protector, as you call him, sees nobody, cultivates no individuals; but, on the contrary, last Friday was se'en-night, attacked Lord Ch. J. Mansfield in particular, and all Westminster Hall in general, most furiously. *'I love the law, but hate the lawyer: I would never have any lawyer whatever concern'd in government,'* were among his wise sentences." ³

There was irony in Fox's words; yet the sentiment was one after his own heart. And may we not well ask how the majority of members of twentieth-century Cabinets would have fared at Pitt's hands?

Fox was among the few members who gave their vote in the Commons against the bill, following the lead of his friend, Mansfield, its chief opponent.⁴ We are told

¹ H. Fox to J. Campbell, Bath, November 15, 1758.

² Sir Horace Mann sent him home garden ornaments from Italy early in 1758 (Walpole's *Letters*, iv. 126).

³ H. Fox to J. Campbell, March 28, 1758.

⁴ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 297. It was dropped in the House of Lords after acrimonious discussion.

that he also resisted Granville's Navy Bill, which passed both Houses. He certainly spoke upon the affair of Lord Tyrawley, the Governor of Gibraltar, who was censured through the instrumentality of Lord George Sackville for the expense he had recently incurred in strengthening the works of that fortress. Tyrawley, who had been in communication with Fox upon the subject two years before,¹ insisted upon being heard at the bar of the House in his own defence. He met with complete success, after Fox had exposed Sackville's underhand conduct ; and spoke out in so unparliamentary a manner, that his accuser was soon glad to retire from the fray.

The session following opened in a riot of prodigality and extravagance. " Our unanimous House of Commons prais'd their own unanimity, their minister, Mr Pitt, to the skies, and the expense made and to be made in Germany so long, that I did not get to dinner till near six." ² Pitt, intent on his schemes of victory, paid no heed to the means or methods of finding money, provided that it was ready to his hand when required. His lofty isolation secured a complete ascendancy over the House of Commons. However difficult the expedition to be despatched, however costly the subsidy to be granted, no dissentient voice was raised against his demands.

It was not to the Paymaster's personal advantage to interfere in this reign of profusion. The more numerous the contracts, the more liberal the subsidies, the more extensive the military operations, the greater was the harvest which he would gather into his coffers. If Fox was so intent on plunder as Walpole hints, he had but to sit still and grow rich at his leisure. Certainly we do not find him raising objections to the system which obtained, for he would not have wished to provoke a contest with his late rival.

But Pitt's more active colleagues did not take his

¹ See *Chatham Corres.*, i. 199.

² H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, November 23, 1758.

arrogance in such good part. To their lot fell the drudgery and the onus of ill-success ; the laurels of victory were reserved for his brow alone. For Legge and the other Whigs in the Ministry, the position was especially galling, though they kept their dissatisfaction to themselves. For a time Newcastle had put up with slights and disdain. He revelled in the patronage which was now his to dispense without check or hindrance. In the spring of 1758, he scornfully refused to entertain a suggestion from the King that he should " manage " Fox, and by combination with him oust Pitt.¹ Yet a year later we hear of him " veering round again." He was then struggling to gain recognition from Cumberland and Bedford ; and succeeded in establishing some connection with the latter through his followers, and through Fox himself.²

Another malcontent was Holderness, Pitt's fellow Secretary of State. Though a man of mediocre understanding, and of no weight in that or in any other Ministry, his defection from Pitt led indirectly to important consequences. Early in 1758, to spite his haughty colleague, he had connected himself with Bute, to whom he was able to give full information of the secret counsels of the Government. Pitt was aware of this leakage, but short of dismissal, which would have occasioned a break with Leicester House, was powerless to prevent it. His relations with the young court had now entered upon a less cordial stage. His extravagance in finance ; his refusal to assist Prince George to the independent command of the British army in Germany, which he coveted ;³ and his open denunciation of Lord George Sackville, the heir-apparent's protégé, after the battle of Minden ; were all calculated to loose the bonds of that alliance. As long as their inclinations ran parallel, Pitt was prepared to humour and flatter the youthful Prince ; but when their

¹ Newcastle to Hardwicke, May 16, 1758 (Add. MSS. 32,880).

² Walpole's *Letters*, iv. 258 : *Memoirs*, ii. 353.

³ See von Ruville's *Life of Chatham*, ii. 245

wills came in conflict, the minister was not the one to give way in the heyday of his triumphs.

Pitt evidently perceived the rocks upon which he was drifting, for in December 1758 he sought an interview with Bute.¹ Their mutual reserve led to unsatisfactory results; and as time went on the breach steadily widened. All sorts of rumours were abroad in the spring of 1759. Newcastle and Fox were again to join forces, and Bedford to become Secretary of State.² Fox and Cumberland, too, were said to be making overtures to Leicester House.

There is no evidence to prove either of these statements; but we hear from Fox himself that he had been well received at Savile and Leicester Houses. But that was as late as November 1759.³ There are earlier signs, as well, that he felt more assured of his future position. "I am morally sure," he wrote to Lady Caroline, "of staying where I am whilst the King lives. And I think it looks more and more ev'ry day as if I may have my choice whether I would stay or not in the next reign."⁴

The estimates for the year 1760 shewed an increase of three millions. Pitt had less than ever to fear in the way of opposition. His schemes were succeeding to a nicety. Well might Frederick now say, "Il faut avouer que l'Angleterre a été longtemps en travail, et qu'elle a beaucoup souffert pour produire Monsieur Pitt; mais enfin elle est accouchée d'un homme."⁵ The financial position of France was lamentable—a condition upon

¹ The authority for these negotiations and intrigues is a series of "Private Memoranda" in the Newcastle Papers at the British Museum (see Riker's *Henry Fox*, ii. 166-170). The information contained in them was chiefly collected for Newcastle by the Comte de Viry, the Sardinian Minister.

² "Memoranda for the King," May 2, 1759. Newcastle was preparing to contradict the tale, and added, "These reports came from my Ld Temple's quarter."

³ H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, November 22, 1759. Savile House was Prince George's residence.

⁴ December 2, 1758.

⁵ *Chatham Corres.*, i. 444.

which many of Pitt's plans had been founded. All the fears of invasion, which had troubled the minds of many during the spring of 1759, had faded away. A hostile expedition directed against the coast of Ireland met with disaster. The French fleet had been driven from the seas by Boscawen and Hawke. In America, the capture of Louisberg was followed by important successes in the interior, culminating in the fall of Quebec and the capitulation of the whole of Canada. Victories and captures in India itself, and in the West Indies, added their quota to the total of Britain's successes. Even upon the Continent, where Frederick had only maintained himself with difficulty against the combined onslaught of the Austrians and Russians, England's star had remained in the ascendant. Prince Ferdinand drove back the French in a series of brilliant campaigns; though the advantage of numbers, as at Minden, was almost invariably against him. It is true that these triumphs were due to the commanders of the forces employed, but the initiative of the schemes must certainly be placed to the credit of Pitt's far-seeing brain; and that fact was recognised by the British public.

Peace might now have been obtained; but Pitt was resolved to leave nothing to chance. He would not release his grip on the throat of France, until she had experienced the full bitterness of her degradation.

The session of 1759-60 opened on October 13. A month later, Pitt proposed the erection of a monument in Westminster Abbey to Wolfe, the hero of Quebec, who had fallen in the final assault. Fox made one of his rare appearances in the House of Commons on that occasion, and described the scene. "I was sadly disappointed yesterday. I expected a fine funeral oration. Pitt never spoke so ill in his life, and so low sometimes, and wept or pretended to weep. Then Beckford. He cried too. It was an ill wrote scene, ill acted."¹

There is little of interest in Fox's correspondence during

¹ H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, November 22, 1759.

that winter and the ensuing summer. His letters are full of allusions to his eldest niece, Lady Susan Fox-Strangways,¹ a girl of seventeen, on whom he seems to have lavished the affection of a father, being denied a daughter of his own. He had undergone much worry and unpleasantness during the trial of John Ayliffe, his steward and agent, who had originally held the same position with Mrs Strangways-Horner. Ayliffe had forged Fox's signature to a lease under aggravated circumstances, and suffered the extreme penalty of the law in November 1759.²

But before the end of the year the whole complexion of affairs was in a moment changed, and a new King was seated upon the throne of England. On October 25, a fortnight before his seventy-eighth birthday, George II rose as usual from his bed. An hour later, he was found dead on the floor of his room by his valet. The ventricle of his heart had burst: "closing," as Fox expressed it, "by the easiest death that can be imagined, a long, and for a King's, a happy life."³

¹ Lord Ilchester had assumed the additional name of Strangways, after Mrs Strangways-Horner's death in 1758, in accordance with the terms of her will.

² See *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1759, pp. 548, 578.

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 3.

CHAPTER XXIII

GEORGE III was twenty-two years old when he succeeded his grandfather. The system of education upon which the Princess of Wales had insisted for her son had rendered him industrious and Godfearing, but had not qualified him in other ways to meet his future responsibilities. The seclusion in which his youth was passed tended neither to broaden his views nor to further the general expansion of his mind. From the hour of his father's death, Prince George had been encouraged in that hereditary mistrust with which a Hanoverian heir-apparent was wont to regard the occupant of the throne. He had been bred on the Utopian theories and visionary doctrines of Bolingbroke and his school. He was taught to regard with horror the domination of the Whig families. The first step towards salvation, he believed, was to be found in a Tory hegemony.

His childhood had been solitary and uneventful. Associates of his own age, his brother Edward, Duke of York, only excepted, were rigidly excluded from the diminutive circle of Leicester House. His preceptors and his mother's friends were the sole companions of his early manhood. His range of vision was so confined, that he lacked that knowledge of the world which is essential for the proper understanding of public affairs. Yet, once the trammels were removed, the natural activities of his mind and body forced themselves into full play. Unaccustomed to take counsel with others, his obstinacy of character begot self-reliance beyond his years. To the belief that he, and he alone, could restore the equilibrium of a tottering con-

stitution by taking the control into his own hands, can be traced the chief efforts of the first decade of his reign. The result was calamitous to the welfare of England and her Colonies. The system which he erected in order to abolish the impurities of the existing order of things was utterly fallacious. Abuses cannot be purged by abuses; though this truth was not one which King George learned to recognise. Fortunately in years to come a stronger and a better man arose, and restored the country to that place among nations which had been so nearly sacrificed to the narrow pedantry of her ruler.

To the ideas of the ordinary citizen, the position of affairs at George II's death was not one which called for drastic change. The boggy of a Stuart restoration had been laid to rest for ever; and all parties were combining to hail with delight the accession of a well-favoured young Englishman, who had the advantage of being born and bred in the country. To the outward eye, the wheels of government were revolving smoothly, under the guidance of a minister who had proved himself eminently fitted to direct one of England's greatest wars. Successes in all parts of the globe were adding territory to her dominions, and augmenting the glory of her arms. A few more of such triumphs, and her enemies were at her feet.

But Prince George thought otherwise. Even the first few days of his reign gave some foretaste of a new era.¹ He received the news of his grandfather's demise while riding near Kew. Pitt came to him without delay, but was informed by the new King, as he told Fox later in the day at Savile House, that he would give his own orders about the formalities which were customary upon such solemn occasions. George then proceeded to Carlton House, one of the Princess Dowager's residences. But,

¹ For the events of the next two years we can avail ourselves of Fox's own narrative, published in the *Life and Letters of Lady Sarah Lennox*, vol. i. The other printed authority for the occurrences of the first few months of the reign is Walpole's *Memoirs of the Reign of George III*, vol. i.

owing to a mistake, the Privy Council and the ministers assembled at Savile House, the Prince's own place of abode. It was understood that the Council meeting would be held there; and they were not summoned to Carlton House till between four and five in the afternoon. Even the Duke of Cumberland, who had gone straight to Kensington from Windsor, and thence to Savile House, was kept waiting there for two hours. The King, however, shewed him great civility when he came, and expressed a wish that they should live well together. Newcastle, alone of the Government, was sent for direct to Carlton House, and was received in audience. The conversation seems to have been limited to complimentary phrases on both sides.¹

Soon after six o'clock the King came to the Council and read his declaration. This had only been communicated to Newcastle and the two Secretaries of State a few moments before the meeting; though Bute afterwards allowed to Lord Shelburne that the document had lain in readiness for some years.² Certain phrases of ominous significance were altered in the subsequent printed version at the instance of Pitt, who only got his way after a lengthy struggle. In the speech, as actually delivered, the war was termed *bloody and expensive*; no allusion was made to it being *just and necessary*; nor was there mention of England's allies in connection with the *honourable peace* which the King expressed himself anxious to obtain.

The part which Bute was to play in the new reign was foreshadowed in that first interview between the King and Newcastle. "My Lord Bute is your good friend," said the former; "he will tell you my thoughts at large." Though a man of no real ability, and certainly unfitted to regulate the education of a future King of England—a part which he had undertaken since 1756—Bute had made

¹ Newcastle to Hardwicke, October 26, 1760 (Add. MSS. 32,913); Albemarle's *Life of Rockingham*, i. 9.

² Fitzmaurice's *Life of Shelburne*, i. 33.

himself indispensable to the new monarch. Prince George had imbibed his maxims, and now looked to him for assistance to put them into practice. On the very day of George II's death, Bute was pressed to take Holderness's place as Secretary of State. He firmly refused the offer. "He did not like to fling himself into so much business, and besides he did not know what His Majesty's ministers would think of it."¹ This was his excuse. In reality he probably felt that the time was not yet come to shew his hand; and for the present preferred to proceed warily on his road to high office. He therefore remained Groom of the Stole, with a seat in the Cabinet, to which the King added his name and that of the Duke of York at the first Council meeting.²

For the moment the Government continued *in statu quo*. Conditions were not yet ripe for the sweeping changes which were soon to alter the whole character of the Administration. The Whig party had been in undisputed possession of the field for half a century. Jacobitism was dead; and the Tories were therefore qualified to take their share in the government of the country. George was resolved that they should have that opportunity. It was as gratifying to his feelings to be able to further the interests of the party in whose principles he had been brought up, as it was convenient to him to adopt an instrument so suited to his schemes. The Whig oligarchy must be crushed out of all recognition before he could realise his ideals—the ideals of Bolingbroke in *The Patriot King*. He would be no figurehead like his grandfather and great-grandfather. He was resolved to be a ruler in deed as well as in name.

Grave were the difficulties which Bute and his pupil

¹ Newcastle's Secret Memoranda, March 3, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32,919).

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 8. Fox states in his *Memoir* that the appointment was announced at the second Council on October 27, a meeting of which, by mischance or neglect, he received no warning. This was clearly a slip on his part; for he wrote to Ilchester, in a letter dated October 28, 1760, "Lord Bute took his place in Council yesterday."

had to face. Had the existing Government stood firm, the plans of the court would have fallen to the ground. But as usual there was little real unity between the various sections of the Whig party. Discord flourished unchecked; and in this fact lay the King's chances of success. His policy was to strain the existing fissures to bursting point.

The indecision of the Duke of Newcastle was as usual a source of great weakness to his associates. His first instinct had apparently been to retire altogether from public life—a dignified step well suited to a man of his years and long service. But his half-hearted request was refused by the King. He was too valuable to be spared—till the time for Pitt's removal had arrived. His influence during the coming elections was as necessary to the court as were the Secretary of State's services during the continuation of the war. Newcastle turned to his friends for advice. Hardwicke, who was himself resolved to take no further part in active politics, and Stone, strove almost alone to strengthen this determination. But in vain. Devonshire, Bedford and others urged him to remain. They feared the effect of changes in the Administration; and mistrusted a new Parliament chosen without the assistance of his money. Fox never believed that his Grace had any real thought of voluntarily surrendering his power. "All people," he wrote, "press'd him to do what he never seriously thought of not doing." Four days more determined the Duke to take "a new court-lease of folly."¹

Even Pitt had pressed Newcastle not to vacate the Treasury. Signs were not wanting to shew the Secretary the way the land lay. The aspersions upon his war policy, the advent of Bute, the return of Lord George Sackville to St James's, were all unmistakable indications that his power was on the wane. A possibility even still remained of defeating the court intrigues by a stable alliance with

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 11.

Newcastle. But his Grace would have none of it ; and to this refusal Walpole imputes Pitt's subsequent animosity towards the aged Duke. Perhaps Newcastle suspected a secret understanding between Bute and Pitt.¹ Yet in reality, to Bute, the latter shewed himself haughty and unbending. There had been little real cordiality between the men for the past two years ; and although a working agreement was arrived at, the arrangement had all the indications of an armed truce.

Fox remained an interested spectator of these inter-ministerial bickerings, in which he had no share. Prognostications of Prince George's future attitude towards Cumberland had brought nothing but cold comfort. The new King had been taught to look upon his uncle as the vilest of men. His vices had been magnified, and his weaknesses exaggerated. His whole life had been held up to the young Prince as a pattern of all that was depraved and unwholesome. To Fox, therefore, the courtesy with which his patron had been received on the first day of the reign came as a welcome surprise. " Still great civility to the Duke," he wrote to his brother, " who if I know or may advise him will never aim at more." He felt more reassured too as to his own prospects. The King had even remarked to Cumberland that Fox was looking well. Apparently his courtesies had not been thrown away. " I believe I may do what I most wish—set still here, looking on, and wishing well."² But a serious element of uncertainty still remained. Was the King's cordiality heartfelt, or was it the result of system ?

" The D. of Cumberland thinks all His My's civility to him grimace : that H.M. has no sincerity. I never thought H.M. did or could from his heart love an uncle, whom from his cradle he was taught to hate & fear ; and do not call his great civility therefore insincere in the bad sense, but a right and proper effect of resolution."³

¹ Williams's *Life of Chatham*, ii, 70.

² H. Fox to Ilchester, October 28, 1760 ; Walpole's *Memoirs*, i, 7.

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 33.

For the moment, however, the situation was favourable beyond Fox's most sanguine expectations. He was therefore encouraged to make the most of the opportunity, forgetful of the former prejudices of the new court and of the King's grudge for the advice which he was believed to have given nine years before.¹ It was an open secret that a new batch of peerages would be created before many months were out. "This was an honour," to use Fox's own words, "I had long and indeed beyond measure been ambitious to obtain for my family. On the 24th of Novr, therefore, I gave a letter to the D. of Cumberland. It is impossible to behave with more kindness and affection than H.R.Hss did, but an awkward unwillingness to ask, made him delay too long what he was resolved to do." ²

Fox's letter speaks for itself :

"SIR. After the great condescension and extreme kindness with which Your Royal Highness has so long treated me, you will perhaps wonder that I chuse to write rather than to speak. The truth is, I cannot trust my judgment where my desire is so strong, and if I ask a very improper thing, I shall, by writing save myself the pain of seeing in Your Royal Highness's countenance that it is so. You will only burn my letter, and forgive my error.

"Sir, I am, on my son's account, beyond measure desirous of a peerage, and on my own of obtaining it by you. May I then humbly wish that Your Royal Highness could, without doing what would be disagreeable to you, ask it personally of the King for Lady Caroline? I say Lady Caroline, because I don't know whether the D. of Newcastle, and perhaps others, would wish me out of the H. of Commons. I should think they would not. Shall I be accus'd of vanity if I compare myself, even with some degree of preference, to Legge, who got it in this shape in the last reign, or to Sr Thos Robinson, who gets it in another now? I am sure I won't compare their patron with mine."

Cumberland clearly felt the inconvenience of Fox's

¹ See *ante*, i. 180.

² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 24.

request, for it was not until two months had elapsed, on February 19, that he broached the subject to the King. It was then too late. The numbers had been fixed, and His Majesty, in all probability inwardly delighted at a convenient excuse, declined to add to them. This he did "with professions of regard and unwillingness to refuse"; and, with great praise of Fox, "acknowledging the propriety of the request (in which perhaps he was not sincere)." ¹

But no single failure ever daunted Henry Fox on such a quest. He had flattered Newcastle with "the strongest professions," at two conferences held in December with his Grace and Cumberland; and had expressed himself "for keeping things as they were." ² He now turned to Bute, who, as we shall see, had recently spoken of him in flattering terms to his brother-in-law, the Duke of Richmond. The step did him harm; but it was one which he still maintained in after-years was wise. He asked Bute's support with the King, in the belief that the latter would be more likely to push the claim, which Fox admitted was likely to meet with strong opposition from his fellow ministers, if he knew that it had already been put forward by Cumberland as a special favour. But Bute unexpectedly shewed symptoms of jealousy, and seemed to resent the fact that he had not been originally let into the secret.

Fox was much mortified at this rebuff. "I do not comprehend Lord Bute's way of thinking: I might more truly say I do not know it on this occasion. If I have done wrong, I suffer for it; but in all my uneasy thinking I cannot find out what to accuse myself of." ³ This he wrote to his new ally, Lord Fitzmaurice.

Fitzmaurice was an only child, born in 1737. His grandfather, Thomas, first Earl of Kerry, who died in

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 25.

² Newcastle to Devonshire, December 19, 1760 (Add. MSS. 32,916).

³ H. Fox to Fitzmaurice, February 20, 1761 (Lansdowne MSS.).

1741, had married Anne, only daughter of Sir William Petty. Their second son, John, took the name of Petty, and succeeded to the family estates on the death of his mother's last surviving brother, Henry, Earl of Shelburne, in 1751. He had been created Viscount Fitzmaurice during that year, and was granted a revival of the earldom of Shelburne in 1753.¹ His death in May 1761 cut short his son's hopes of making a name for himself in the House of Commons, to which he had just been elected after a brief military career. Fitzmaurice had distinguished himself at Minden, and was promoted to be colonel and aide-de-camp to the King for his services at Kloster Kampen, in October 1760. This appointment brought him into close contact with Bute, with whose avowed aims and objects he was much in sympathy.²

Fox seems to have taken advantage of this growing friendship to improve his position with the new court. He was well acquainted with Fitzmaurice's father, Lord Shelburne, and had laid him under various obligations. He had strongly recommended to Bedford one of Shelburne's friends for an Irish Bishopric, and was possibly instrumental in securing for him the much-coveted peerage of Great Britain.³ Besides this, Fox assisted Shelburne to "quash the horrid importunity" of some of his creditors, shortly before his death, by the loan of a large sum of money. "I tell it you," wrote the latter to his son, "that you may seek some opportunity to express to him my gratitude, and that in proportion as you interest yourself in my case, you may profess yourself wishful to contribute, by any service in your power, to requite his goodness."⁴

¹ He married his first cousin, Mary, daughter of Hon. William Fitzmaurice, in 1734; and was created Lord Wycombe in the peerage of the United Kingdom, in May 1760.

² *Life of Shelburne*, i. 82, etc.

³ Shelburne to H. Fox, December 15, 27, 1757; March 28, 1759.

⁴ Shelburne to Fitzmaurice, April 25, 1761 (Lansdowne MSS.).

So it was that we find Fitzmaurice on terms of intimacy with Fox at the commencement of 1761, and employed by him as a means of communication with Bute. He was responsible for a meeting between the two men early in February.¹ There is nothing to shew at whose desire this interview was arranged ; nor have we any clue to the subjects discussed at it. It seems clear that the peerage was not in question ; for Fox was then still relying on the good offices of Cumberland.

But of their later meeting, on February 27, we have full particulars.² Fox had forwarded to Fitzmaurice, on the 20th, with a covering letter, a paper to be given to Bute. This, unfortunately, is not forthcoming.

“ It contains nothing but truth, and indeed I think the whole truth ; some that I am ashamed of, I mean the little resolution with which I bear this disappointment. I have, indeed, said nothing of the unmanly envy it occasions in me ; but I still flatter myself that nobody can at last more thoroughly withdraw into that narrow circle where all my happiness shall depend on myself and family. It costs at first to philosophize, but the philosophy will not be less perfect and calm and uninterrupted when it is determin’d. It is not so yet, or I should not write thus much about it.”³

By this time Bute’s plans were matured. He had convinced himself of the necessity for some recruit of recognised ability to fight his battles in the House of Commons. Fox was his man. And so he contrived to send him away fully satisfied that his wish would be granted within the next twelve months. Nor did he scruple to repeat the assurance subsequently to Fitzmaurice. “ It was a promise ; I meant it as such.”

Fitzmaurice’s appointment as aide-de-camp gave rise to an outburst on the part of Richmond, which was hardly

¹ H. Fox to Fitzmaurice, February 7 (?), 1761 (Lansdowne MSS.).

² Fox’s *Memoir*, p. 25.

³ H. Fox to Fitzmaurice, February 20 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 86).

calculated to ingratiate the representatives of the old Whig families with the King. The recent promotion of Sir Henry Erskine, who had been dismissed in 1756 for a vote against the court, had given him precedence over Fox's brother-in-law. The latter was much offended, and also at the removal of his cousin, William Keppel, from Gentleman of the Horse, to make room for one of the new courtiers. His complaints were coldly received by His Majesty; but a subsequent hint was let fall by Bute that a vacancy in the Bedchamber was at his disposal, if he chose to take it.¹ Richmond accepted the offer on condition that Keppel was also retained; though he had publicly abused Bute and the Scotch nation generally at White's after his audience with the King—a fact which the favourite took care to shew was well known to him. His Grace had recourse to flattery; and in the course of conversation tried to discredit the Paymaster.² "Fox," said he, "was a good-humoured, sociable man, and whom he loved in private life"; but he had not, nor would he have, any connection with him in public. Bute, however, to his great surprise, did not take the bait; and referred to Fox as "a man of ability and talents and of character." Such men were few, he said; and expressed a hope that the King would not part with them.³

But on December 4, less than a fortnight after he had been sworn of the Bedchamber, Richmond received a further shock. His brother, Lord George Lennox, and Mr Fitzroy, the Duke of Grafton's brother, were passed over for Fitzmaurice and Lord Downe.⁴ Instigated by Lady

¹ Fox gave no credence to a generally accepted rumour that Richmond had asked for the post. Richmond's justification is published in the form of a letter, in Dodington's *Diary*, p. 454.

² H. Fox to Ilchester, December 9, 1760. "He disclaimed me, lest he should be thought to be govern'd. With no other meaning, I believe; and I am glad of it, for I would not be thought to govern him."

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 22. Richmond seems to have frankly related the conversation to his brother-in-law.

⁴ According to Richmond's version of the episode, Fitzmaurice and Downe, who had since died of wounds, had been promoted to the rank

George Lennox, he hurried to town, and, on December 8, had a stormy interview with the King. Grafton, who preceded him in the audience-chamber, accepted the situation after three minutes' conversation. Richmond stayed twenty, and made the King excessively angry.

"The D. of Richmond's audience was very offensive. The King very firm and sensible. His Grace resigned his Bedchamber and not his regiment. This day, a quite different conduct with Lord Bute. What this will end in, I can't tell. Only Lord George Lennox will not have the rank of col., and his Grace loses all character. These two points are too certain."¹

Richmond received little sympathy from Bute, when he wished next morning to be understood not to have resigned. "Not resigned, my Lord? why the King says you flung it in his face." He was then told to consult with Fox; but he took counsel with his cousin, Lord Albemarle, and with Cumberland. The latter advised him to retire into the country; which he did, "much dejected."²

Parliament was opened by the King in person on November 18. An addition in George's own handwriting to the draft of his speech, a document which Pitt had only received half an hour before he was to read it at the customary Cockpit meeting, occasioned a fracas between the Secretary of State and Bute at the Cabinet Council two days later.³ Newcastle too, even in these early days, had begun to realise his impotence.

"I am the greatest cipher that ever appeared at court. The young King hardly civil to me; talks to me of

of colonel for their services at the battle of Kloster Kampen over the head of Lord George Lennox. The latter had been present at the same action, and had also greatly distinguished himself.

¹ H. Fox to Ilchester, December 9. The fact that Richmond retained his regiment was much commented upon.

² Fox's *Memoir*, pp. 23, 24. See also Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 26.

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 13.

nothing, and scarce answers me upon my own Treasury affairs. . . . Is this giving me the countenance and support which is necessary for me to carry on His Majesty's business, much less what is sufficient to make me happy and easy ? " ¹

By the end of the year Fox thought that things were soon bound to come to a head. "His Grace talks to some as Minister ; to others, that he has no means to chuse, nor to reward when chose, nor is to have any. I think some explanation, rough or smooth, must be had soon." Indeed, confusion only grew worse confounded in ministerial circles as time went on. Pitt commended Legge in the Commons, shortly before the latter's dismissal ² : and in the same debate treated George Grenville, "his honourable kinsman," as he called him, with contempt, although he was shortly afterwards selected for a seat in the Cabinet. Many of the court appointments, too, were filled without reference to Newcastle, the nominal head of the state.

In one instance only did Fox interfere in the ministerial changes ; and had his way. Welbore Ellis, a joint Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, who had by Fox's "friendship and accident got into a place much above his pretensions, and was the only man in England who did not think so," ³ was in danger of being turned out to make room for Sir Thomas Robinson. Notwithstanding his private opinion, Fox fought as hard on his friend's behalf as he had often fought in the past. An appeal to Bute proved successful. Ellis remained ; and Robinson's claims were bought off with a peerage.

At last, shortly before the prorogation of Parliament, Bute made up his mind to take a more active part in the affairs of the country. He gave out that the King insisted, and that he "obey'd unwillingly." But in reality

¹ Newcastle to Hardwicke, November 7, 1760 (*Life of Hardwicke*, iii. 310).

² See p. 127.

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 15.

his change of attitude was due to the belief that an early peace was becoming more than a possibility. The intercepted correspondence of the Spanish Ambassadors in Paris and London, Grimaldi and Fuentes,¹ and that of the latter with the Spanish Minister, Wall, translated without difficulty from an ill-constructed cipher, made it clear in the early months of the year that France would not be adverse to, nay would even welcome, a separate peace. That Government had already approached Russia and Austria to permit the despatch of a note to Britain and Prussia. Further, Frederick, who fully realised the gravity of his position, notwithstanding his recent victory at Torgau, considered that the separation of France from her allies was his best chance of safety; and actually proposed that England should, upon certain conditions, open negotiations.²

Pitt was in no hurry to bring matters to a head. The more desperate was France's situation, the more favourable would be her offers. He was resolved to await her advances with patience. But this was not the view of the court. As long as the war lasted Pitt was a necessity to the Ministry. But when once peace was assured, the situation would become very different. Here was Bute's opportunity. The popular welcome, which he believed would be extended to a successful treaty, should be made to enhance the glory of the Crown. With the assistance of Newcastle, who favoured pacific measures, Bute hoped to drive Pitt from his exalted seat. Once freed from his clutches, the King would be able to boast that his victory over the Whigs was in sight.

To achieve this great object, Bute saw clearly that he must take high office. Unless he bestirred himself, the triumph might be snatched from the court party and claimed by others. And so, urged on by Dodington, who had his own selfish ends in view, he decided to take

¹ See *Chatham Corres.*, ii, 89, etc.

² See von Ruville's *Life of Pitt*, iv. 325.

the Secretary's seals from Holderness. By a crafty stratagem, in which Viry, the Sardinian Minister, played a leading part,¹ Newcastle was persuaded to seek an interview with the King, and actually to propose the favourite's promotion. George naturally raised no objection to the suggestion, and promised to do his best to win the consent which he knew required no persuasion. Next came the task of breaking the change to Pitt, who cannot, however, have been as ignorant of Bute's intentions as Fox seemed to think.² Bute had discussed the whole matter with Temple more than a fortnight before, and no serious objections seem to have been raised.³ Nor did Pitt display any marked annoyance during his interview with the new Secretary on March 13, the day subsequent to the announcement; though he had formerly expressed himself opposed to the allotment of any ministerial post to a King's favourite.⁴ He was pacified by Bute's specious promises that his direct intercourse with the monarch should continue unaltered, and submitted to the inevitable.⁵

Holderness's removal, Fox tells us, was not imparted to him until the actual morning; but it seems probable that he was not unaware that some such action was intended. In any case his complaisance was amply rewarded; and he retired for ever from the stage of public politics. Other changes followed. Lord Halifax went to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant. Legge, on account of a recent act of insubordination, was deprived of the Chancellorship of the Exchequer,⁶ which was given to Barrington. Charles Townshend became Secretary-at-War in his place.

¹ See Williams's *Life of Pitt*, ii. 71.

² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 36. "This was not imparted to Lord Temple, and through him to Mr Pitt, till the day before."

³ Memoranda, February 26, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32,919).

⁴ Newcastle to Hardwicke, January 20, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32,918).

⁵ Newcastle to Devonshire, March 13, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32,920).

⁶ See Fox's *Memoir*, p. 39.

Fox shewed no surprise at these events.

“ I was at court this day, and pleas'd to see it by many examples prov'd, how rightly I had ever call'd a new reign a new world of which we could know nothing beforehand. Lord Holderness had paid the most abject court to Pitt and Lord Bute, ever since, forgetful of all gratitude to the late King, he resigned in 1757, to help in forcing Pitt, &c., upon His late M. Here was he disgraced, and not a man to look sorry for it. The Dukes of Bedford and Devonshire, who had, in their different ways, without decency both slighted Leicester House and never made court there, in the highest favour. Here was Dodington, who had come in with me, and was turn'd out without any mercy when they prevailed in 1757, kissing hands for his long wish'd for peerage ; and Egmont, who had been the manager and fomentor of mischief under the late Prince, uncertain whether he should get even into the H. of Commons.” ¹

Fox believed that Bute had made a serious error in taking the seals without being certain of a peace—an opinion shared by Horace Walpole.² His message to the new Secretary, transmitted to him by Lord Shelburne, was expressed in guarded language.

“ He does not, no more than I do, wish your Lordship joy of it but congratulates the public very much, and wishes you all the private and particular satisfaction and success the situation can admit of and your Lordship's wishes suggest. Since Sir Robert Walpole's time there has been no Ministry in this kingdom ; and he hopes this will be the beginning of a durable and honourable one to both King and state.” ³

Parliament was prorogued on March 19, after an uneventful session.

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 37.

² *Ibid.*, p. 75; Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 43.

³ Fitzmaurice to Bute, March 1761 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 87).

“ The scene of business was so little laid in Parliament that very few actors went ; none perform’d any part there worth relating. It was difficult to get a House when the question was to raise more millions in one day than our ancestors even in this century would have thought of voting in 3 sessions, and no difficulty when there was a House either as to voting or appropriating it.” ¹

The writs for the new Parliament were issued on the 21st. “ Elections went very much as Lord Bute wish’d, who made use of the King’s money privately, which was publicly, ostentatiously and really refus’d to the D. of Newcastle for these purposes of elections.” ² The ostensible object of the court was to secure purity of elections, the reality to undermine Newcastle’s influence. His Grace found himself thwarted at every turn. An announcement was made that no money would be issued from the Treasury. Yet Bute secretly made full use of its coffers, and the King himself even took a hand in nominations to crown boroughs. Corruption flourished as in the most venal chapters of English political history. For the first time a borough put itself up to the highest bidder ! To such depths had the new theories of government already brought the country.

After Christmas private theatricals had been the rage at Holland House. The two leading performers were Fox’s niece, Lady Susan Fox-Strangways, and his sister-in-law, Lady Sarah Lennox. Lady Susan, his brother’s eldest child, now nearly eighteen, spent much of her time at Kensington. Her uncle doted on her, and his letters at this period are full of allusions to her charm of appearance and manner. Lady Sarah was two years younger than her friend. After her mother’s death, in 1751, she had been brought up in Ireland by her sister, Lady Kildare, and was transferred to Lady Caroline’s care in November 1759.

Both the young ladies seem to have developed remark-

¹ Fox’s *Memoir*, p. 41.

² *Ibid.*

able histrionic talent. Fox was loud in his praises of Lady Sarah. He extolled her prowess, and wrote of her extraordinary performance of *Hermione*, "I never saw a part so well acted in my life."¹ Of a subsequent production, *Jane Shore*, we have a long account from Horace Walpole's pen, in a letter to George Montagu.²

"The two girls were delightful, and acted with so much nature and simplicity that they appeared the very things they represented. Lady Sarah was more beautiful than you can conceive, and her very awkwardness gave an air of truth to the shame of her part. . . . I was infinitely more struck with the last scene between the two women than ever I was when I have seen it on the stage. When Lady Sarah was in white, with her hair about her ears and on the ground, no *Magdalen* by Correggio was half so lovely and expressive."

Lady Sarah's portraits do not give us the impression of that transcendent loveliness of which her contemporaries raved. But vivacity of expression and the swiftly changing gleams of sunshine on the feminine countenance can seldom be reproduced, even by the brush of a Reynolds. Fox's description is probably true to life: "Her great beauty was a peculiarity of countenance, that made her at the same time different from and prettier than any other girl I ever saw."³ It was the combination of charm of feature, fascination of manner, naïveté and simplicity of character which so attracted Prince George, and might have placed her on the throne of England, had her ambitions been equal to those of her brother-in-law.

The episode of the young King's courtship, for courtship it clearly was, has so often been told, that we hesitate

¹ H. Fox to Ilchester, January 1, 1761.

² January 22, 1761. *Letters*, v. 18. Charles Fox took the part of Hastings; and Henry, who was only six, that of the Bishop of Ely, "dressed in lawn sleeves and with a square cap; they had inserted two lines for him, which he can hardly speak plainly."

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 26.

to commence the tale afresh. Yet to omit it from Fox's life-story is impossible. Old King George had taken a fancy to little Sarah, when, in the days before her father's death, he had seen her romping in Kensington Gardens. He insisted upon her being brought to court, as soon as he heard that she had taken up her abode with the Foxs. But the artless prattle of a child of five had given place to the shy awkwardness of fifteen. She shrank from the monarch's unexpected familiarity, and drew coarse words of disappointment from his lips, which abashed and frightened her. Prince George was present, and, struck with interest and pity, did his best to console the shrinking girl.¹ Their friendship ripened, and admiration on his part grew into affection. His accession to the throne made little difference: indeed, as King he had more opportunities of conversing with her at the private balls and parties given at St James's. At one of these entertainments early in March he took Lady Susan Strangways aside, and in language unmistakable told her that he had received many suggestions from abroad as to who should be his Queen, but that he had considered her friend and confidante the fittest by far of them all: and bade her tell her so.

At the moment, however, Lady Sarah was occupying herself in a childish flirtation with young Lord Newbattle, Lord Ancram's son, and on the morning of her next meeting with the King had received a letter from the young man which hurt her pride and wounded her susceptibilities. And so, when her royal admirer asked if her friend had delivered his message, he only received a snub for his pains; and turned away affronted. To escape from Newbattle she went to Goodwood; but he overtook her on the road and made up the quarrel. Thence she went on to stay with Lady Susan's parents at Redlynch; and there, shortly after, broke her leg by a fall from her horse.²

¹ *Lady Sarah Lennox*, i. 85.

² *Game-Books*, March 31, 1761.

The visions of future authority and influence which that conversation between the King and Lady Susan had conjured up for a short moment, faded away from before Fox's eyes. In his opinion Lord and Lady George Lennox¹ stood convicted of aiding and abetting this fool's play upon the part of the young people; and he poured forth the vials of his wrath upon their ill-timed efforts at match-making. Lady Sarah cared little for the King, to whose attentions she had probably given scant thought. She certainly was not in love with Lord Newbattle, whose unfeeling remark, that her legs were ugly enough before her accident, was faithfully reported to her on her bed of sickness. The King's behaviour was very different. He declared that Hawkins, the fashionable London surgeon, must be sent down to her at once, and enquired "very tenderly"² after her. A week or so later Fox drew His Majesty into conversation on the subject, and by a harrowing account of her sufferings elicited expressions of pain and uneasiness on her behalf. "Don't tell Lady Sarah," wrote he, "that *I am sure* he intends to marry her, for I am not *sure* of it."³ Indeed, he was in doubt how the King might regard the Newbattle folly, which he knew had been reported at court, in all probability with many exaggerations.

For long before this, Leicester House had become alive to the danger which was threatening. The Princess's influence over her son depended on a wife of her own choosing. An English bride had certainly no place in her schemes, especially one connected by the closest ties with Henry Fox. But she had sufficient confidence in her powers to be assured that King George would bow to

¹ Lady George Lennox was Lord Newbattle's sister. Fox's anger flared up again later against her with unaccustomed violence, in a letter to Lady Caroline. "I wish you will never, or let Ly Sarah (while you have care of her) be alone or have any privacy with her. A jade!" (April 21, 1761).

² H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, April 7, 1761.

³ *Ibid.*, April 1761.

her authority. Though the rumour of the selection of a Princess of Brunswick proved untrue, Lady Sarah's prolonged absence from London gave time to her and her adviser, Bute, to look about them on the Continent for a suitable match. Even Cumberland seems to have expressed objections to a daughter of the Duke of Richmond—a fact which gave Fox great umbrage.

On May 22, Lady Sarah returned to town. The King wasted no time in recommencing his courtship; and with every conversation his attentions seemed more apparent to all observers. Especially at the birthday ball, on June 4, his devotion was most marked, and the damsel "returned the fondness of his eyes and the gallantry of his discourse as much as he could wish. He is in love with her," added Fox, "and it is no less certain she loves him." For a whole hour, "did those two lovers entertain one another and the eyes of the whole ball-room. He stopp'd very remarkably as he was going, and turn'd and spoke again and again, as if he could not force himself from her." ¹

All this while, however, his mother was not inactive. Lady Bute was instructed to interrupt the royal *tête-à-têtes*, and Princess Augusta, the King's sister, tried to affront Lady Sarah, laughing in her face.² On June 7, came the first appearance of a change. "There were not those ardent looks of fondness, nor any particular expressions to Lady Sarah. The ladies say he has been tutor'd." They were probably right. The Princess thought it high time to interfere, and once for all had made her wishes clear.

At this juncture Fox left London for a week's sea-

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, pp. 47, 48. Lady Susan, in an unpublished Journal, which is among the Melbury MSS., vouches for the accuracy of Fox's statements. Standing next to Lady Sarah, she could see everything; and though she could not hear every word, she did catch a great deal of the conversation recorded.

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 64.

bathing,¹ leaving Lady Sarah at Holland House, where Walpole tells us that she appeared every morning making hay in the field close to the great road along which the King used to pass on horseback. On Thursday, June 18, she went to court with Lady Kildare, in whose hearing the King implored her to remember what he had said to Lady Susan before she left for the country. So certain did his intentions appear to her relations after this conversation, that Lady Sarah was carefully primed with what she should say at her next meeting with the King on the following Sunday.² Fox was determined that no mistake should occur this time. But Leicester House won the day. Lady Susan Stuart and Princess Augusta never allowed the lovers out of hearing. On Thursday, the 25th, the King made no allusion to his former remarks; and a week later he was again closely watched, and said nothing in particular.

On Saturday, July 4, the murder was out. It was rumoured that the Council, summoned on the 1st for the 8th, was to announce the King's approaching marriage with a foreign princess. Fox was left in the dark. "The secret is ridiculously kept. Nor will those that know tell me a word, or even give a hint of it."³ But at the Council meeting, at which "more than 60" were present, and Fox among the number,⁴ all doubts were set at rest. The King declared his intention of marrying Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg, and fixed the coronation for September 22. He had blindly accepted the bride whom his mother had found for him, yet continued his courtship of Lady Sarah till after the summons of the Privy Council. Well

¹ He had taken Whitfield House, a cottage, near Margate, in the Isle of Thanet, close to the sea, for two months from May 1 (H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, April 16, 1761).

² See *Lady S. Lennox*, i. 102.

³ H. Fox to Waldegrave, July 6, 1761.

⁴ H. Fox to J. Campbell, July 9, 1761. There is no foundation for Macaulay's statement that Fox alone of the Privy Councillors was not summoned to the meeting.



PALEMON AND LAVINIA.
By J. R. Smith, after Lawrenson.

might Fox write, "Is it to be accounted for and made consistent with honesty, good nature or common sense?" "He seem'd confus'd," he added, "when he made his declaration in Council, and more so as he came by me in going away. . . . But he has since behaved to us all with the greatest ease, except to the person most concerned."¹

An explanation of the King's conduct was sedulously circulated by Lord Bute's friends to the effect that he had only intended to make Lady Sarah his mistress. Of this shameless suggestion Walpole makes short work, and his version of the story, "The King had thoughts of her as a wife; but wanted resolution to oppose his mother and Lord Bute," has all the appearance of truth.²

It was most fortunate for the young lady in question that her affections were not seriously affected. A new pet, we are told—a hedgehog, consoled her for the loss of a crown!³ "Luckily for me I did not love him," she wrote, "and only liked him, nor did the title weigh anything with me; so little at least, that my disappointment did not *affect* my spirits above one hour or two I believe."⁴ "Lady Sarah's mare is lame," wrote Fox to his brother, "and her squirrel ill. These two misfortunes do really vex her. The other set very light upon her indeed. Lady Sarah look'd notably cross to-day as became her."⁵ He was describing her first meeting with the King. Evidently she carried out her resolution to the letter. "I shall take care," she had written, "to shew that I am not mortified to anyone, but if it is true that one can vex anybody with a cold, reserved manner, he shall have it, I promise him."

That Lady Sarah should have accepted an invitation

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 50.

² *Memoirs*, i. 65.

³ H. Fox to Ilchester, July 30, 1761.

⁴ Lady S. Lennox to Lady S. Strangways, July 7, 1761 (*Lady S. Lennox*, i. 105).

⁵ July 16, 1761.

to act at the wedding as bridesmaid to the new Queen, and as train-bearer at the coronation, is proof sufficient that her disappointment was not deeply seated. The family was divided upon the propriety of her appearance in such rôles. Lady Caroline strongly opposed the suggestion, and was supported in her arguments by Lady Susan, who had received and accepted a similar summons. Fox seems to have been in favour of her presence at the ceremonies. "The King shall behold your pretty face and repent," said he in jest. The young lady looked upon it as the best way to see the sights; and as her inclination was supported by others of her relations and friends, her reply to the Lord Chamberlain's letter was couched in the affirmative.

Did Lady Sarah in her heart of hearts repent of her waywardness at the sight of another in the place which she might have occupied? Who can tell? The spectacle was deeply impressed on her memory. Nearly sixty years later she had forgotten nothing of the circumstances.

"She talk'd enthusiastically of the King's looks and manner at his coronation which she saw in the Abbey. So fine a figure in the robes he wore; of the chair he sat on; of his grave and solemn manner, and great attention to the great charge he was undertaking—this contrasted with his youthful countenance, his beautiful teeth. The Archbishop's anointing him, the splendour of all around, she could never forget."¹

Years afterwards, during her last stay in England, Princess Augusta,² whom Lady Sarah had looked on as an enemy, sent for her.³ She told her that she had seen the whole correspondence between the young King and Lord Bute. Had Lady Sarah shewn that she liked the

¹ Journal of Lady S. O'Brien, April 25, 1818.

² Princess Augusta married Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel in 1764, and died in 1813.

³ Lady S. O'Brien's Journal, 1818.

King more, and Fox royalty less, the Princess opined that all Bute's wisdom would not have prevailed. The Paymaster's management of the case was the principal cause of his disappointment. The real objection of the court was not to the beautiful girl in whose veins ran the blood of the Stuarts. It was aimed at her guardian, the Whig politician. Had his influence prevailed, the Princess Dowager's teaching would have been thrown away. But Fox played as many gamblers have played before. The stake was too high, and he was not at his best. He threw away his chances of winning the game.

CHAPTER XXIV

WITHIN a few weeks of his acceptance of the seals, Bute had occasion to demonstrate that he would allow no interference with the duties and privileges of his office. Proposals of peace were received in England at the end of March, and were communicated to Pitt by Prince Galitzin, the Russian Ambassador, notwithstanding the fact that the new Secretary had control of the Northern Department. Bute immediately remonstrated, and expressed resentment at the slight which had been put upon him. Pitt acknowledged that he was in the right; and the incident closed with the Ambassador's apologies for his blunder.¹

One of the propositions put forward by the foreign powers, that a Congress of all the belligerents should be held at Augsburg, was accepted by the British Cabinet without demur. The *Mémoire* which accompanied it, enclosed in a letter to Pitt from Choiseul, the French Foreign Minister, was a more debatable document. Contained in it were overtures for a preliminary agreement between Great Britain and France, on the basis of their respective conquests in various parts of the world at fixed dates. A suggestion was also made that plenipotentiaries to settle the points at issue should be forthwith exchanged.

It is not our purpose to enter deeply into the intricate negotiations which lasted through the summer. The despatch of representatives was agreed to; but on neither side was the selection altogether a happy one. Hans Stanley, whose powers, contrary to Pitt's wish, were

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 42.

strictly limited, was the latter's nominee, though in reality a follower of Newcastle.¹ M. de Bussy, also, appointed by the pacific Choiseul, was said to belong to the opposite faction who favoured Austria and a continuance of the war. Hence arose a reasonable suspicion that he was not adverse to procrastination. Indeed, owing to delays on the part of France, the plenipotentiaries did not leave for their respective destinations until late in May.

Pitt, bent on an expedition against Belleisle, and thirsting for further triumphs in more distant climes, would have none of the epochs proposed. He judged rightly too that French conquests in Germany were to be thrown into the balance against England. She would thus be compelled to buy back her allies' losses at her own expense, or incur the imputation of having deserted their interests. To those members of the Cabinet who had failed to grasp this material point, the French proposal seemed more favourable than anything they had expected. "It was so good," wrote Fox, "that many of the ministry would not believe it sincere or that the French could mean it; and from this suspicion of their own, found obscurity and room for chicane in the clearest language that was ever penned."² But Fox's views, as enunciated in his *Memoir*, were plainly influenced by his distrust of Pitt, and by his friendship for Bedford, who was willing to make any concession to obtain peace.

Pitt had his way in postponing all definite decision until after Bussy's arrival. His only declared opponents in the Cabinet at this time were Newcastle, Hardwicke and Bedford. Fox summed up the situation in these words:

"The D. of Bedford is the only man that ventures to

¹ Fox wrote that he did not remember a choice so universally cried out against, but could not understand the reason. Stanley certainly proved himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him.

² Even Bedford, the out-and-out pacificator, doubted the good faith of the French. See *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 14.

oppose Pitt strongly ; which he does with great superiority and with great ability, knowing the subject he speaks upon, which Pitt is entirely careless whether he knows or no, and consequently is generally very ignorant of. But the Duke is himself unstable, and takes such whimsical turns that there is no relying on him.”¹

On June 7, came news of the taking of Belleisle. Hereafter Pitt seemed more anxious for peace, the advent of which he would have welcomed upon his own terms at any time during the negotiations. He put forward definite proposals in which epochs were fixed, calculated to include fresh victories.² Choiseul's genuine desire for peace was also unmistakable. He shewed undoubted moderation in the new conditions which he confided to Stanley about this time. His position was difficult. It was his business, on the one hand, to placate the British Government with adequate propositions ; on the other, to avoid offence to the French nation by unnecessary sacrifices. Canada was his bait for the one ; and the retention of some hold on the Newfoundland fisheries, a sop for the other. But upon this very question of the fisheries the crisis arose. Pitt declared his intention of obtaining for England the sole rights in those waters, and again carried his point in the Council, though not without serious difficulty. Bute was careful to take a middle course. The success of the King's schemes was at stake. To side with Newcastle might earn the unpopularity of having thwarted Pitt in obtaining a valuable concession ; to range himself by the side of his fellow Secretary might imperil the chances of peace.

Early in July a change was perceptible in Choiseul's language. For the first time during the *pourparlers*,

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 44. Compare *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 56.

² Choiseul's original proposals had been that each country should retain the possessions which they held (1) in Europe on May 1, (2) in the West Indies on July 1, and (3) in Asia on September 1. For these dates Pitt now proposed to substitute (1) July 1, (2) September 1, (3) November 1.

allusion was made to the demands of Spain. The unbending attitude of the British ministers had convinced the French King that he could no longer hope for reasonable terms. He fell back into the arms of the war party, and Choiseul had no choice but to follow him, in order to retain his power. Alliance with Spain might prove a means of continuing a war which had become impossible without some new connection.

King Charles III, the Bourbon prince who had recently exchanged the crown of Naples for that of Spain, had for years been bitterly hostile to Great Britain. He was well known to be awaiting an advantageous moment for bringing to a head the various questions which were outstanding between the two countries. Secret negotiations were initiated between France and Spain, and culminated in an offensive and defensive alliance, known as the Family Compact. This was signed on August 15. For the next few months, therefore, all the efforts of the French Government tended towards delay. And so, notwithstanding the arrival of news of further British triumphs in the East and West Indies, Choiseul no longer evinced his former spirit of moderation and compromise. Nor was the attitude of the English Government more conciliatory. All hope of a successful termination of the negotiations died away; and by the middle of September both plenipotentiaries were recalled to their respective countries.

Throughout the summer Newcastle and Bedford had remained steadfast to their desire for peace at any price. The latter had, on several occasions, threatened to desist from attendance at the Cabinet meetings, and was with difficulty persuaded to remain.¹ Bute was equally anxious to put an end to the war, but differed with them in one important respect. He clearly recognised the fact that peace must only be concluded on really advantageous terms. Indeed, in his opinion, the limit of concession

¹ Bedford, at the King's desire, had continued to assist at the meetings, after his resignation of the Lord-Lieutenancy.

had been reached at the end of June. And believing that France was at her last gasp and that she would be bound in time to agree to the British demands, he favoured a resolute bearing with regard to the Newfoundland fisheries.¹ So sure was he of his ground that we find him a week later endeavouring to spirit up the Dukes of Newcastle, Devonshire and Bedford to "something vigorous."² He had complained bitterly of Pitt's insolence in the latter days of June³; but in pursuance of "his vain imagination of gaining equal popularity with Pitt"—a popularity to be placed to the credit of the Crown, he was, again to use Fox's words, "in such points as he thought would at all effect that, of Pitt's side in Council; and carrying the cyphers of the Cabinet with him outvoted the sound part of it." There could be no real cordiality between Pitt and Bute, who were by nature incompatible, as Gilbert Elliot found when he tried to bring them together.⁴ But the support which the favourite was able to afford his colleague at this juncture was sufficient to wreck the negotiations. Fox was probably correct in his belief that but for this temporary union, peace would have been secured.

It was, however, no part of Bute's scheme to allow Pitt to become all-powerful. A succession of defeats in the Cabinet had driven the peace party to despair. Bedford was again talking of secession, and Devonshire seemed likely to follow in his footsteps. Even Newcastle threatened retirement from office. Should such an eventuality occur, Pitt would remain master of the situation. Bute now considered that he had given ample proof of his eagerness for sufficient and considerable terms of peace, and that the time had arrived to make strong efforts to save the negotiations from failure and the Ministry from

¹ Bute to Bedford, July 12, 1761 (*Bedford Corres.*, iii. 29).

² *Grenville Papers*, i. 376.

³ Newcastle to Bedford, July 2, 1761 (*Bedford Corres.*, iii. 19).

⁴ See Fox's *Memoir*, p. 51. Elliot, afterwards Sir Gilbert Elliot, a Lord of the Treasury, was father of the first Earl of Minto.

disintegration. About the middle of August, therefore, Devonshire, employed by the King in his wonted rôle of peacemaker, reassured Newcastle and Bedford with promises of support from Bute, and with hints that some measure of concession was intended. Pitt shewed temper at this check ; but was not as yet prepared to go to the length of resignation.

No fresh incidents arose to disturb the ministerial tranquillity until after the King's wedding and coronation. By then, the French had concluded their new alliance, and stiffened their attitude. It became patent to all that conciliation had been employed too late. Stanley's recall was decided upon on September 15. Three days later, Pitt presented a memorial to the Cabinet, to prove that an alliance between France and Spain was an accomplished fact, and to demand the commencement of immediate hostilities against the latter country. The increase of intimacy during the summer between the two nations had been very marked ; and ministers had information, from intercepted correspondence and from Stanley's dispatches, to shew that some definite agreement between them was now in existence. Pitt was probably as ignorant as his colleagues of the fact that Spain had actually pledged herself to war in the interests of France. Had he received secret intelligence of this most significant clause in the Family Compact, it seems inconceivable that he would not have divulged it. But he was convinced in his own mind that sooner or later Spain meant business. He was prepared to stake his reputation upon it ; and was anxious to deprive her of the advantage of being first in the field.

With the exception of Temple, Pitt found no supporter in the Cabinet. An ultimatum was the furthest concession which he could wring from his more cautious colleagues. He was outvoted and defeated ; and had thoughts of immediate resignation. Bute was, however, honestly anxious to keep Pitt in office for the present. He sought

to persuade him to give way, and to withdraw the document which he intended for the King. But all in vain. Pitt remained obdurate; and though, for a few days before Stanley's return, there seemed possibilities of a change of policy on the part of Choiseul, he refused to give credit to this straw at which the peace party were so wildly snatching. Stanley's arrival in London brought news that a renewal of the war was inevitable. A few days later, on October 2, the crisis was reached. Pitt repeated his demands at the Cabinet meeting. He was unable to get his own way, and, with Temple, resigned.

Bute had desired to retain Pitt until peace was in sight. He had failed. He had become involved in difficulties which were too great for him. He had driven his colleague from office when he most needed him; for war was close at hand. Nor was it long before Bute realised the fact. Indeed, he was soon constrained to adopt the self-same policy which Pitt himself would have adopted, but in this less favourable position—that he had deprived himself of the advantages of immediate action. The arrival in Spain of the treasure-ships, upon which Pitt had had his eye, and the latter's disappearance from the English Cabinet, had encouraged Wall, who was still chief Minister in Spain, to open defiance. The warlike policy of Charles III, and the arrogance of Britain on the high seas, had diminished Wall's regard for that country. He haughtily refused requests from Lord Bristol, the British Ambassador, who had succeeded Fox's old friend Sir Benjamin Keene in 1757, for information as to the terms of the Family Compact. Early in December, Bristol was making his preparations for leaving Spain; and at Christmas, Fuentes, the Ambassador in London, presented, with a demand for his passports, a memorial full of virulent abuse of Pitt.¹ Newcastle was still unwilling to force on the contest, but Newcastle no longer counted in Bute's estimation. His utility had ceased with Pitt's with-

¹ *Parliamentary History*, xv. 1129, etc.

drawal: by his complicity in that event he had unwittingly pronounced his own doom. The majority of the Cabinet felt that the provocation was too great to be borne. War was formally declared on January 4.

Bute's position at the commencement of the session which opened in November was in every respect unenviable. The news of Pitt's resignation had raised a storm throughout the country. For a short moment his acceptance of the court's insidious offer of a peerage for Lady Hester and a pension for himself dimmed the great man's popularity. But his justification, written for publication in the City, in the form of a letter, generally made a good impression.¹ The common council passed a vote of thanks to him for his past services to the state; and their example was followed by the corporations of numerous other towns in all parts of Great Britain. The occurrences in the City on November 9, Lord Mayor's day, proved conclusively that Pitt had returned to favour; though it was subsequently ascertained that Beckford was largely responsible for the uproar which prevailed in the streets. The King and Queen dined at the Guildhall, and were coldly received. Bute could hardly win his way through, with the help of a band of paid pugilists. Pitt and Temple, on the other hand, received a very marked ovation. Bute's treachery had recoiled upon his own head.

Nor had the choice of a successor to Pitt proved plane sailing. In point of talent and ability Henry Fox was the most eligible of the band of politicians from whom Bute's selection had to be made. But the reputation for

¹ Henry Fox states that this letter was written to Sir James Hodges. Bristow, the publisher of the *Public Ledger*, in which it first appeared, would not acknowledge whether it was written to Hodges or to William Beckford (*Life of Rockingham*, i. 50). It is printed in the *Chatham Correspondence* (ii. 158) as addressed to the latter. Fox calls it "the silliest letter that was ever penned"; which the event proved it was not, though certain passages were certainly open to misconstruction. Letter-writing was not the greatest of Pitt's accomplishments.

amassing money, which he had earned during his tenure of the Pay Office, was sufficient to put him out of court. The subject had been discussed by Bute and Newcastle, when Pitt's resignation seemed imminent. Andrew Stone, when asked what he thought, said, that though he wished Fox very well, "he would declare his opinion very clearly, that the going from the most popular man to the most unpopular man in England would give such an advantage to Mr Pitt as to put it out of Mr Fox's power 'to be of any service on this occasion.'"¹ Hardwicke, too, expressed himself quite of the same mind, and even shewed some surprise at hearing Fox's name "tossed up."² Newcastle certainly did not jump at the suggestion; and Bute was too fully conscious of his own unpopularity to risk a selection which would have been universally condemned.

Bedford seems to have been the next candidate on the list for the post. His qualifications were ample, his honesty without question. But he was too deeply engaged to peace, and too intimately connected with Newcastle, to make him acceptable to Lord Bute. The combination might well prove a thorn in the favourite's side.³ To George Grenville, Bute now turned in his perplexity. Although he was Pitt's brother-in-law, he had forsaken his banner early in the reign, and had attached himself to Bute.⁴ But Grenville was hankering after the Speakership, and finding himself not permitted to achieve his purpose, definitely refused all offers of the seals. He feared the offence which would be caused to his family were he to usurp the seat so recently vacated by his distinguished relative.⁵ He retained his Treasurership of

¹ Hardwicke to Newcastle, September 27, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32,928).

² *Ibid.*

³ Winstanley's *Personal and Party Government*, p. 81.

⁴ It is interesting to find that the recommendation for his appointment came from Newcastle (Newcastle's Memorandum, October 3, 1761, Add. MSS. 32,929).

⁵ "A delicacy of mind," Mrs Grenville called it (*Grenville Papers*, i. 414).

the Navy, therefore, but added to it the responsibilities of leading the House of Commons. After this failure, Shelburne, who had succeeded to his father's titles in May, and was now closely involved in Bute's counsels, brought to the latter's notice Legge's claims to the post. But finally the seals were given, by Grenville's recommendation, to his wife's brother, the Earl of Egremont, a nobleman of second-rate abilities, whose previous record had little to recommend him.¹

Although Bute had discarded all thought of giving high office to Fox, he was fully resolved to make use of his services in some less conspicuous post than the Secretaryship. The Paymaster was eager for the fulfilment of the promise of a peerage for Lady Caroline, and was in a mood to undertake almost any task in order to obtain it. He began to harbour doubts of Bute's good faith during the autumn months, and wrote to Shelburne placing himself unreservedly in his hands. "I know your honesty and your friendship for me. Say what you please for me; I'll make it good; or say nothing of me if you think that best, as perhaps it is at present." ²

On the evening of September 22, the day of the coronation, Cumberland sent for Fox, knowing that he was to leave for Goodwood early next morning, to visit his son, Charles, who had broken his arm. The Duke told him that Pitt would go out, and that he had been asked to sound him as to his intentions in the House of Commons. He believed, said he, that Fox's mind was set upon a peerage in the near future, and that he had no desire to take a responsible post. The Paymaster agreed, for he did not covet the leadership of the House—the position at which he thought Cumberland had hinted. He added that he thought Bute could not do a more unwise thing

¹ Bute had mentioned his name in this connection about the middle of September (Newcastle to Hardwicke, September 21, 1761; Add. MSS. 32,928).

² H. Fox to Shelburne, September 3, 5, 1761 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 89).

than to set him up as Pitt's successor. Fox left town, and did not return until the evening of October 9. During his stay in the country he received a letter from Shelburne, who proposed that he should give a general support to the Ministry, and promised, on Bute's behalf, that the peerage would be forthcoming at an early date.¹

Fox made no concealment of his disappointment. We have his reply :

"The more I think of the sort of half-opposition mentioned, the more I think it impracticable and merely imaginary.

"To resign and oppose thoroughly, I understand, and may be forced to it, but will avoid it if I can with honour. If I cannot avoid it with honour, I will get as much honour as I can by it.

"But why should I be forced to it? What I ask is not in your opinion enough, nor in mine; so far is it from being too much.

"A like favour to Lady Hester was done the day after it was mentioned. Your Lordship ask'd me, pray ask Lord Bute whether this quite agrees with his promise? His words to you, I believe, were, 'Lady Caroline will be the first the King makes.' Add to this, G. Grenville put over my head, *sans dire gare!* Surely if I am left to digest all this, it is incumbent on me to shew that a wrong opinion has been conceived of me; and Lord Bute will have preferr'd doing a great deal to drive a friend from him, to the doing a very little to preserve one."²

Two points were clearly rankling in his mind. First, Lady Caroline was to make way for the new Lady Chatham, because it might be said, "Pitt forced a peerage last week, this week Fox forces another." And secondly, he himself was to be sacrificed to George Grenville. He felt no ambition to be in the latter's shoes and to take an active part. "I am in a better situation," he wrote to Ellis, "than if I had any hand in directing this whirl-

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, p. 90. This letter has disappeared.

² H. Fox to Shelburne, October 11, 1761 (Lansdowne MSS.).

pool. I am quietly and happily out of its vortex, and so hope and resolve (which is still more) to remain whilst I live.”¹ But he objected to the slur of being passed over in the House of Commons, where he had hitherto been supposed to have considerable weight.² “I am in some pain; because, if I have not a salve, to act in Parli a second part to Grenville will be disgraceful.”³

Fox wrote again to Shelburne on the night of the 11th, and enclosed a note to which he implored his friend to give his most careful attention before their meeting on the morrow.

“The more I think, the more I wish for this salve to honor, and the more I wish for it from Lord Bute in a friendly, generous way, that will for ever oblige me to him. In order to get it so, say nothing that may have the least tendency to anger if disappointed. I should not like to grant to a person that should but insinuate a threat. I hope Lord Bute is of the same make.

“In that belief I wish to be his friend, and hope he does not despise me so much as not to wish it in some degree too.”⁴

His covering letter, in which he again deprecated that partial opposition which seems to have been an integral part of the proposals, ran as follows⁵:

“Let me beg you to read over the inclosed thoughts

¹ Holland House, October 10, 1761.

² Shelburne to Bute, October 12, 1761 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 92).

³ H. Fox to Ilchester, October 10, 1761.

⁴ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 92.

⁵ *Ibid.* i. 94. This ambiguous attitude, to which Fox repeatedly raised objection, was probably directed against Newcastle, who among other differences did not see eye to eye with Bute on the subject of the conduct of the war in Germany. Lord Fitzmaurice has treated Fox's note as a separate letter, though the fact that it is not among the Lansdowne MSS. shews that it was sent on to Lord Bute. The covering letter is dated, “October 1761. Sunday”—clearly October 11. The memorandum, which Lord Fitzmaurice has made use of as that forwarded to Bute on this occasion, belongs to the preceding February, when Fox was making a determined effort to secure a peerage for his wife. (See *ante*, ii. 119, 120.)

to-morrow, before you have that conversation which will probably decide of my conduct.

"You are certainly mistaken as to the possibility of gaining any credit by partial or moderate opposition. Such might be carried on in concert with persons seemingly opposed, but the friendship ought to be strong and well cemented between those who oppose, and are seemingly opposed.

"I see no such friendship wished for with me. You have so often heard that I question whether you yourself are not of opinion that my unwillingness to oppose may proceed from interested and pecuniary views, at least in some measure. Indeed it does not, nor do those who set about that calumny believe it, for they saw me refuse the Secretaryship of State in 1754, and resign it in 1756, and I am afraid will see me resign the Pay Office, which when I have done, you will be sorry for it. My dear Lord, I shall not do it till forced by honour, and consequently cannot afterwards repent of it.

"I'll wait on you after or about two to-morrow. Adieu."

The two men met next day ; and in the evening Shelburne wrote a long letter to Bute, lamenting his ill-success as a negotiator. He enclosed Fox's note for his perusal. He explained that he had found him dissatisfied and distinctly suspicious, but expressed a belief that his confidence could easily be regained by a show of frankness.

"Your Lordship had been so good as to promise him a particular favour within the year. None appeared to him so easy as to grant this a little sooner upon this occasion, but still, if that does not suit your Lordship and you will send to him and tell him that the necessities of the Administration make the one necessary, as well as make the other inconvenient at this time, tho' you are still desirous of Mr Fox's friendship, your Lordship may have as much of it as you please. And he will be ready to be of any use to you with the same sincerity as before,

when he finds that your Lordship, on the one hand, does not suppose him so very interested as he suspected you did; and on the other, does not scruple to avow that regard for him with that degree of confidence (which is far from unbounded in his idea) which he thinks his professions of regard deserve, and which brings it pretty nearly to what your Lordship concluded with. . . . Mr Fox puts off his going to Windsor, to wait on you. You will be so good therefore to send to him when you choose; and I have only to beg that you will take up the conversation upon the footing of this letter, as I took up the conversation with him upon the footing of his note, which I received instantly as I returned home.”¹

A meeting was arranged for the 15th. Bute told Newcastle that he should not yield to Fox's point, and hinted that he knew how to deal with him.² But Fox came away satisfied. He gained the liberty, which he “thought not a little,” “to speak of the assurances given some months ago and now renew'd.”³ We have no definite knowledge of the exact measure of service which he was to render to the Crown in return. Probably the arrangements made on this occasion underwent some modification before the end of the month. Bute had reckoned without Grenville; who, according to his own shewing, had been induced to take the leadership, in order to counteract the power of Fox and his party.⁴ Newcastle found Gren-

¹ Shelburne to Bute, October 12.

² “His removal would be as popular as the removal of others has been unpopular” (Newcastle to Devonshire, October 14, 1761; Add. MSS. 32,929).

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 59. His gratitude is further displayed in a letter to Shelburne, written on same day, printed in *Life of Shelburne*, i. 95. He added, “I fancy Lord Bute was content with me. I was extremely so with him.”

⁴ Grenville refused to have any intercourse of business with Fox, and when he informed Bute that he should say so to the King, was asked not to mention his name. He was, Bute said, “already so exasperated against him that it would alarm his mind to hear that any such propositions had been made” (*Grenville Papers*, i. 415).

ville very uneasy on the 28th. "He is apprehensive of making a bad figure, and I could perceive plainly, he is jealous of Mr Fox, of his abilities, his power, his connections and his numerous friends in the House of Commons, whereas he has none." ¹ It became necessary to set his mind at rest, for he even hesitated to take the appointment.² A "padlock" was fitted to Fox's mouth.³ Shelburne's letter to Bute on October 31 ⁴ gives the heads of the final agreement.

"I did what you desired exactly as I could. Mr Fox will attend every day, and will, either by silence or by speaking, as he finds it prudent according to the occasion, do his best to forward what your Lordship wishes, *and will enter into no sort of engagement with any one else whatever.* He will endeavour likewise to see your Lordship once a week. The rest depends upon yourself, and I trust will not be neglected."

The new Parliament met on November 3. Fox had given up his seat at Windsor, where he was succeeded by Augustus Keppel, Lord Albemarle's brother. Charges of bribery were threatened in 1758, which caused unpleasantness and probably determined him to break off his connection with the borough. He was returned for Dunwich, a Suffolk constituency which was rapidly disappearing into the North Sea.⁵ He had obtained the promise of the borough, in May 1759, from his friend Sir Jacob Downing, who inserted a

¹ Newcastle to Hardwicke, October 28, 1761 (Add. MSS. 32,930).

² Newcastle to Rockingham, November 3, 1761 (*ibid.*).

³ Hardwicke to Newcastle, November 1, 1761 (*ibid.*).

⁴ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 97.

⁵ Even at the end of the seventeenth century there were but forty residents in the borough: and in 1816 it was described as forty-two houses and half a church (Porritt's *Unreformed House of Commons*, i. 64).

condition in his will that it should remain under Fox's control.¹

In spite of the recent changes, the court and Government could boast of little unity. The Secretary-at-War, Charles Townshend, that "most vain and fickle of mankind,"² nearly came to blows with Grenville at the Cockpit meeting on the eve of the opening of Parliament. He was jealous of the latter's new authority in the Commons, and henceforward, forgetful of his obligations to Bute, began to make advances to Pitt. The question, too, of the future of the British troops in Germany occasioned a division in the Cabinet. Newcastle was in favour of their retention till peace was assured. Bute, on the other hand, fearing that war with Spain was unavoidable, was genuinely imbued with the belief that the resources of the country were insufficient to carry on two simultaneous campaigns. He felt that Pitt's resignation would not have been long delayed, when the moment arrived for abandoning Frederick, even if he had supported his colleague's bellicose proposals in September. For the moment, however, he had no desire to shew his hand, and to give Pitt new cause for wrath. Hence Bute's uneasiness when Shelburne, in the opening debate of the House of Lords on November 6, spoke openly in favour of withdrawal. He feared that his friend's words would implicate him, and be considered as part of a prearranged plan. Fox had to be called in to soothe the favourite's ruffled feelings.³

For the moment, Pitt shewed no desire to obstruct the Government. His speech in the House of Commons on the address, on November 13, was a temperate exposition of the circumstances in which he found himself placed.

¹ Sir J. Downing to H. Fox, May 4, June 18, 1759. An ill-natured remark of Walpole, at the time of Sir Jacob's death in February 1764, suggests that he had expectations of a legacy from him, and that he was disappointed (*Letters*, vi. 6).

² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 59.

³ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 100.

He spoke freely of his determination to uphold a continuance of the war in Germany ; but demonstrated his unwillingness to create friction. The path of neutrality which he was treading was strewn with difficulties. On the one hand, his friends were urging him to uphold his principles openly ; on the other, his enemies were trying to goad him to intemperate speech and action by their insidious attacks.

For ever since Pitt's resignation his opponents had redoubled their activity. Bute and the court were seeking, as we have already seen, to undermine his popularity and thereby to limit his power of opposition. Fox, bent on ingratiating himself in those circles, was more than willing to lend them every assistance. Indeed, he was probably not adverse to a campaign on his own behalf against his late adversary. That the blame for such action was laid on his shoulders is certain. " My absence," he wrote to Ellis on October 10, " has not prevented some people in the City from laying this national calamity at my door and that of the Duke of Bedford's. We have conjointly wrought this evil work, thro' treachery, envy, villainy and what not." Walpole tells us that scurrilous pamphlets were put into circulation, written by Dr Francis, a clergyman closely connected with Fox, from notes supplied by him.¹ Indeed, the shade of tempestuous intolerance which colours every reference made to Pitt by Fox in his *Memoir* and in his letters at this time is very marked. Yet the virulence of his hate cannot be imputed to any desire to re-enter the lists with him. Fox definitely stated that he had " left off " ambition.² We believe

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 123. Fox mentioned to Shelburne, in a letter dated January 7, 1762 (Lansdowne MSS.), that *Mr Pitt's letter versified*, and *A letter from the anonymous author of the letters versified*, were written by Francis. He added that he did not wish the fact to be known.

² H. Fox to Shelburne, December 29, 1761 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 101). Also Hillsborough to H. Fox, July 15, 1761, " What has extinguished your ashes of ambition since I saw you, if any heat remained in them then ? "

that he was impressed with a very real conviction that Pitt had hindered peace to suit his own ends. He was persuaded that his former rival's obstinate insistence upon a continuance of the war had wrought incalculable mischief. But he allowed his malice and aversion to overset his better judgment. Again and again he repeated that the minister who had guided England through the dangers of the war was "a very silly fellow."¹ So impressed was he with this idea, that any attempt to impede and discredit Pitt was, in his eyes, the performance of a laudable service.

We find constant allusions in Fox's letters during the summer and autumn to his belief in the necessity of peace. "Peace seems slipping away," he wrote to Mr Campbell on July 9. "A battle is suppos'd to be by this time fought; and Pitt has so far carry'd his wicked point as to have delay'd at least our recovery, if recovery is a word to be still us'd or the thing hop'd for by any sensible man for this perishing country." Fox uniformly lamented the failure of the negotiation, and went so far as to confide his fears to Bute. His despondency increased when the possibility of war with Spain developed into certainty.

"The very people who were so fond of this war, when Mr Pitt was prevented from declaring it, are in the utmost consternation now it is declar'd. Such is this nation, deserving its ruins, which I am however griev'd to see so near effected. Pitt, who has ruin'd it, is fallen, and, if I mistake not, never to rise again. Could, therefore, this new war have been parry'd? I was in hopes both the governors and governed were coming very fast into a disposition to put an end to the old one on reasonable terms; which might have been done last summer; which all mankind now think should have been done; and which, if Pitt foresaw, as his friends boast he did, a

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 57.

Spanish war, he was doubly blamable for having prevented." ¹

Attacks upon the late Secretary of State were a feature of the debates in the House of Commons during the month of December. Charles Townshend, on the 9th, moved for a vote of £1,000,000 to sustain the army in Germany. Rigby, speaking as the mouthpiece of Bedford, who had, but a month before, accepted the Privy Seal, protested against the retention of troops in the north of Europe. Sir Francis Delaval followed in a like sense. But more important, George Grenville threw his weight in the scale against Pitt and the measure which he had formerly supported. Existing treaties must be upheld, he said; but in his opinion those treaties ought never to have been made. Pitt defended his policy. In the course of his speech he took notice of an allusion by Delaval to a taunt directed against Fox in a speech in November 1755. The Prussian treaty, he had then said, "would hang like a millstone round his neck, and sink any minister along with the nation." ² That was true, he repeated, having regard to the way in which Germany was formerly managed. Now the millstone was about the neck of France. Then, looking Fox full in the face, he added, "If any gentleman in this country would venture to take the lead on any other plan but the present, he would make his heart ache." ³ Grenville he treated with studied contempt; although the new leader's speech was hailed with approval by Bute. ⁴ In the Report stage, on the

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 56.

² See *ante*, i. 285.

³ *Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 83. See also Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 101.

⁴ Bute to G. Grenville, December 10, 1761 (*Grenville Papers*, i. 418). The wording of this letter is most significant: "Millions of congratulations upon your very great, very able and manly performance: this will do, my dear friend, and shows you to the world in the light I want, and as you deserve."

We cannot agree with Dr von Ruville (iii. 15) with this and similar

following day, Charles Bunbury, a member of an old Suffolk family and a follower of Fox, made his maiden speech. He belittled the King of Prussia, and spoke disrespectfully of the late King. "A great deal of bombast and false action; a set speech calculated for a reply to Mr Pitt the day before, but kept till it was stale."¹ His effort, however, sank into insignificance after the intemperate effusion which gushed from the lips of another novice. Colonel Isaac Barré, the friend and comrade-in-arms of Wolfe, had been brought into Parliament for Chipping-Wycombe by Lord Shelburne. His striking appearance and the classical turn of his eloquence would have attracted the immediate attention of the House, apart from the ferocity of his language. His speech combined abuse of the Hanoverian policy of King George II with a virulent onslaught on Pitt, against whom he was reputed to bear a grudge for failure to obtain promotion after Wolfe's death. His sentiments on the German war were a repetition of those of Shelburne in the House of Lords, and as such carried weight. Pitt was not present; and no one took up the cudgels on his behalf, though Charles Yorke, the Solicitor-General, defended the late King.

On December 11, Pitt was in his place and gave his full support to a motion for the papers on the Spanish fisheries. Barré did not let slip the opportunity of renewing his attacks, and by his vehemence put Pitt quite out of countenance. The latter attempted to check the torrent of abuse by calling him to order for a misuse of the King's name. Fox intervened, and by his justification of the words which Barré had used, drew from him fresh intemperance. This incident, of little importance in itself, confirmed men's minds in the belief that Fox evidence before our eyes, that Bute does not bear the largest share of the responsibility for the attacks upon Pitt at this time. Fox was not alone to blame.

¹ J. Milbanke to Rockingham (*Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 81).

had helped to instigate the assault.¹ Indeed, we cannot help remarking that the language of Fox's own vituperations against Pitt throughout his *Memoir* is the language of Barré's speech. Yet the fact remains that Fox's instigation can only have been indirectly exercised; for ten days later we find him asking Shelburne to introduce him to "the warrior," when they returned together from the country.²

Barré's conduct found partizans among those who delighted to see the great man baited; and he was "honoured with more than common attention at court."³ But the general feeling of the House was adverse to such scenes, and a renewal of his scurrility a few months later met with the cold reception which it deserved.

Within a few days of Barré's début in the House, Fox seems to have become alive to the fact that his motives were misunderstood. In accordance with the terms of his compact with Bute he had refrained from taking part in the recent debates. The public, therefore, had no means of realising that the depth of his belief in the necessity for peace was the primary cause of his feeling against Pitt. It was attributed to vulgar malice and disappointed ambition. Again he turned for advice to Shelburne; and seems to have asked whether he should not take some immediate opportunity of explaining his position. Shelburne's reply speaks for itself, and incidentally throws strong light on his own sentiments at the time towards Pitt, to whom he was to transfer his allegiance in the near future.

"My head ach'd so much yesterday, that I was not as clear a judge as I wish'd when you ask'd me about your speaking. I have since been thinking of what the

¹ Charles Fox taunted Barré during a debate in 1771, with having assassinated Pitt behind his back; but was told to go home, if he wished to learn the name of the person who had set him on to that assassination.

² H. Fox to Shelburne, December 22, 1761 (Lansdowne MSS.).

³ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 102.

Duke of Cumberland said, and I own I differ from him. Consistency and a firm uniformity of conduct forms a great, I mean a distinguish'd and commendable part, of Mr Fox's character as to the publick. The contrary is Mr Pitt's. Therefore personal considerations (with regard to the Spanish papers) make Mr Pitt not scruple to put the nation in a repeated flame upon account of his own justification. This is according to himself, and this, in my opinion, no man is warranted in doing. And I am persuaded, if ever you chuse to speak again, and then declare this to have been the motive of your conduct, which I do believe to have been the real one, it will meet with much more success in every light than being drawn in prematurely, I mean with regard to your own sentiment, into a sea of altercation for no wise end. In the mean time, Mr Fox has, what Mr Pitt shows he has not, tho' he borrow'd the expression, his justification, and in consequence contentment, in his own breast. I write this in a hurry as it occurs." ¹

¹ Shelburne to H. Fox, December 16, 1761 .

CHAPTER XXV

FUENTES, the Spanish Ambassador, left England on the first day of the New Year. The Spaniards were believed to be preparing a stroke against Portugal as their initial effort; for her trade was all-important to Great Britain. England's first duty, therefore, was to send an expedition to the assistance of her old ally. Bute was nothing loath. He could employ the question of the expense involved as an additional argument in favour of withdrawal from Germany. Even Pitt had no illusions upon the increase of strength which the outbreak of war with Spain would place in the hands of the peace party. "Now was the time," said he, "if those he had left had any spirit, which they had not, they would send and recall every man from Germany and so ruin me—but there's no danger of it."¹

True it was that Bute had not yet the spirit to speak out and face the consequences; though, in Fox's words, "he did not depart from that opinion which he did not execute."² He was as anxious as any for peace; and was fully resolved in his own mind to bring the British campaign in Germany to a speedy conclusion. But he would not commit himself publicly. And Shelburne, who was becoming restive under this seeming irresolution, was forced to be content with Fox's assurances that Bute "had no idea that carrying on the German war was compatible with what they had to do besides."³

The position at the moment was far more complicated.

¹ H. Fox to Bute, January 1762 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 102).

² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 61.

³ H. Fox to Shelburne, January 7, 1762 (Lansdowne MSS.).

than it appeared on the surface. Frederick of Prussia seemed nearing the end of his tether. The decision to desert him entirely would spell certain ruin to his cause. Cumberland, whose influence in the war councils had increased since Pitt's retirement, favoured a continuation of the struggle in Germany. The fact also that the French had been sedulously circulating reports of an immediate withdrawal of the British troops, in order to influence Holland, had an important bearing on the question.¹ Money had been voted by Parliament, and contracts made.² All things considered, the time did not seem opportune for so radical a change of policy; and Bute determined that the army should take part in one more campaign.

About the same time, the treaty under which Frederick's annual subsidy was paid came to an end; and the favourite shewed himself loath to renew it upon the same conditions. Parliament reassembled on January 19. Bute took this opportunity of addressing the House of Lords for the first time. Fox wrote an account of the debates to his brother.³

"I am glad Ld Digby did not take my advice. Yesterday's debate was not worth coming for. Lord North spoke above an hour in moving the address. He was too long, but there was good sense in it. Lord Fredk Campbell seconded him. Mr Pitt spoke, it seem'd as if because he had promis'd Lord Temple, languidly and meekly, and said little else than that he was very lame. Beckford was there, & looks thin. They are down. In the H. of Lords, Lord Kinnoul mov'd; Sandys, in the worst speech even he ever made, seconded. Lord Temple spoke ill, and angrily wish'd his tongue was at liberty to say what had pass'd in Council on this war with Spain, which he foresaw was unavoidable and advis'd 4 months ago. Then Lord Bute (they say you might have heard a pin drop upon the mat, such was the silence). He had

¹ J. Yorke to Bute, January 19, 1762. ² Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 129.

³ January 20, 1762.

a tremor, but not such as impeded. He said he hop'd he should succeed in what should be his most earnest advice and entreaty to H.M., viz. to lay the papers relating to Spain before the House, and to untie all their tongues as to what had pass'd concerning it in Council. That then he would enter into the freest discussion of it. In the meantime, he would only assert that when Lord Temple advis'd the war, they knew nothing of this treaty between France and Spain, nor that there was such a thing, but by mere rumour. This Lord Temple deny'd. Time will shew, I'm told, that Lord Bute was in the right. The Dukes of Devonshire and Newcastle were too ill to be there. Neither of them in any danger."

On February 5, the Duke of Bedford moved an amendment to the address. His original scheme had been to appeal for the recall of the troops, but in response to pressure from Cumberland and the court he altered the wording of his resolution, and urged the ruinous expense of carrying on an effective war in numerous spheres of operation. Bute, who had done his utmost to avert the debate, did not directly oppose the motion, but defeated it by moving the previous question. The news of the death of the Czarina Elizabeth had just reached England; and the friendly spirit in which her successor, Peter III, was known to regard Frederick was cited as a further argument for continuing existing arrangements. Shelburne, who had intimated to Fox his intention of taking part in the debate, spoke strongly in support of Bedford, and signed a protest with seven other peers against the decision of the House.

Bedford's independent spirit failed to disturb Bute as seriously as the defection of his lieutenant.¹ He and Shelburne were mutually dissatisfied with one another, and from this misunderstanding dates the parting of their ways. Fox laboured to patch up the quarrel, and to quash a similar motion, which was threatened in the House of Commons. Bunbury, who was now regarded

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 104.

in the light of Lady Sarah Lennox's accepted suitor, had given notice that he would bring forward the subject. But when the day came, the "infant Hercules," as he had been nicknamed, to the general amusement arrived too late. Fox had vainly attempted to make him drop the matter altogether. Bunbury, at Lady Caroline's request, consented to a postponement of two days, in order to allow Fox, who was suffering from a bad sore throat, to be present without danger to himself. The latter intended to speak, at the suggestion of Mr Mackenzie, Lord Bute's brother, in order to appear for Bute, and not to be thought absolutely with Bedford.¹ But on the evening of the 13th, he was able to announce to Shelburne that Bunbury had decided to take no action. He enclosed a copy of the letter which he had written to Bute.

"MY LORD,

"I have the satisfaction to acquaint your Lordship that Mr Bunbury has laid aside his intended motion. It is still a greater satisfaction to me, that Lord Shelburne is the person who has dissuaded him. His Lordship, who loves you sincerely, is so struck with the appearance of acting as if he did not, that though he says and thinks there has not been the least ground for the suggestion, he cannot bear to give any further room for such an insinuation. I am, etc.,

"HENRY FOX."

He added, in his desire to restore peace, that if he had felt better, he would have worded it better, and would have substituted *imputation* for *appearance*. At least he thought that the latter would do no harm.²

¹ Rev. W. Digby to Ilchester, February 13, 1762. Also H. Fox to Shelburne, of same date (Lansdowne MSS.); and Walpole's *Letters*, v. 180.

² *Life of Shelburne*, i. 105. Fox wrote the following epigram on the incident:

"A cock-match at Westminster lately was made,
The cockpit was crowded, great wagers were laid;
The people, impatient, heard at last that the Fox
Had stole over-night both the beautiful cocks."

It was manifestly to Fox's advantage to remain mute in public. He was on excellent terms with both Bedford and Bute, and desired to remain seated on the fence. Cumberland had convinced him a fortnight before that an army in Westphalia was more desirable at the moment than ever. He had not convinced him that its retention was practicable.¹

"I do not think the subject on which the great differ will come into Parlt, or at least in a way that will at all distress me. If the court recalls the troops, no motion will be made. If they do not recall them, there is no difficulty in being against such a motion, without entering into the subject.

"I hear it is not easy to withdraw the troops, but I cannot believe it impracticable, and I am sure it will never be borne as an excuse for the enormous expense of them, that you are not suffer'd to recall them."²

But Fox's aims at the moment were largely personal and material. "Were it not for the sad prospect to this country," he wrote to his brother, "I should like politicks better than ever. I see those I detest sinking as they ought to do, and more and more clearly that I shall be quiet and at ease and put to no difficulties."³

Lord Bute determined to profit by the new relations which had arisen between Prussia and Russia for the furtherance of his schemes. Ever since November he had been dabbling in secret negotiations with France through the agency of the Sardinian Ministers in London and Paris. He now hoped to induce Frederick to profit by his freedom from the terrors of the past by taking a hand in the general pacification of Europe. But the King of Prussia's ideals were anything but pacific. He hoped that the alliance with Russia, which he quickly concluded, would permit him to taste the sweetness of revenge, and

¹ H. Fox to Shelburne, January 7, 1762 (Lansdowne MSS.).

² *Ibid.*

³ H. Fox to Ilchester, January 20, 1762.

even that it might lead to fresh conquests. Unfortunately also two recent diplomatic blunders on Bute's part had caused him to look with suspicion upon the methods of the British Government. And so, far from accepting the condition that any British subsidy should be employed solely to further peace, Frederick wrote a long letter to George III full of the prolongation of the war, and expatiated upon the unequalled opportunity for Prussia and England to crush their enemies for good and all.¹

The bearing of the Prussian representatives in England did not increase Bute's sympathies with their master. Nor did the discovery of an autograph letter, which fell into wrong hands, describing the English minister as only fit for a madhouse.² Naturally Bute was unwilling to make advances of money to be used to defeat his own plans; especially as Frederick was no longer floundering in the mire, as he had been at the commencement of the year. After an interview with Newcastle, on February 22, at which the First Lord expressed doubts of being able to find funds for the army of Germany beyond the present year, Bute made up his mind to refuse the subsidy altogether.³ The fact was definitely announced to Newcastle on April 12, and the policy ratified at a meeting of the Cabinet at the end of the month.⁴

¹ Adolphus's *History of George III*, App. i. 578 (ed. 1840).

² Von Ruville, iii. 46.

³ Newcastle to Hardwicke, February 22, 1762 (*Life of Hardwicke*, iii. 343). Newcastle from his letters seems to have been wavering at this time about the advisability of continuing the subsidy: and was duly admonished by Hardwicke.

⁴ In a letter to Rev. P. Francis, written on August 26, 1762, Fox placed Bute's reasons very clearly before him, and seemed to imply his concurrence by the absence of any criticism:

"You want Ld B.'s reason for not continuing the K. of Prussia's subsidy. In the papers I sent you, you may see that if the Russias were taken off his hands, he thought himself able not only to cope with his other enemys, but to assist us (or something like it, for I quote only on memory). Now the Russias were not only off his hands, but become his friends. And we had a new additional enemy, Spain, to contend with. Why were we to give money we could not spare, to a Prince

Once again his Grace accepted the rebuff. But this time the fiat had gone forth for his dismissal. The secret negotiation with France was progressing favourably, and Bute had no mind to divide the credit for peace.¹ He had had reason to complain of Newcastle for giving information to foreign ministers behind his back²; and was egged on by George Grenville, who was equally determined to drive out the First Lord. Slightings and indignities were heaped on his head. Patronage was dispensed wholesale without reference to him; nor was he consulted in the new list of peerages to be created. Even his subordinates at his own Treasury board were suborned to harass and contradict him on all occasions.

The final blow was administered on May 12, when the Vote of Credit for the war came before the House of Commons. Newcastle had forwarded a requisition of two millions sterling, one for the purpose of the German war, the other for that in Portugal. Bute took the line that one million was sufficient for both. The First Lord remonstrated strongly; and produced a paper from Barrington, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to shew that the finances of the country could not be carried on without the extra money. But all in vain. The King, whom Newcastle consulted, held out no hope that he

who had told us that if Russia was not his enemy, he should not want it? And not only Russia, but Sweden too, had ceas'd to be his enemies. Nor was there one stranger remaining in Germany, except the French; whom we, at a most enormous expense and unassisted by him, kept from going near him if they were ever dispos'd (which I much doubt) to do so. Another reason my Lord B. had, was a just & reasonable disdain of the ignominious treaty Pitt made with that Prince. And what an ally! One, who when we had made for him a treaty which gave him Silesia, & had guaranty'd it, the very next year, if not a few months afterwards, march'd & laid siege to Prague, with less pretence than even Spain attacks Portugal now. For I do not remember there was any pretence. The true reason was to assist France & recall Pr. Charles from Alsace, in violation of a treaty made to enable the Q. of Hungary as an ally to attack France."

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 109.

² *Fox's Memoir*, p. 64.

would get his way. The affront was too great to be borne even by the veteran who had sacrificed so much in the past to place and position. His notification to Bute that he could not go on, brought no word of regret or request to remain. The vote of the Commons sealed his fate. Even then a hint of conciliation would have caused him to reconsider his decision. But none was forthcoming; and he formally surrendered the seals on May 26.

Newcastle had told Ilchester that since the first interview at which he mentioned his intention of retiring, when he was politely treated and desired to consider, he had had no gracious or even civil words spoken to him in the closet.¹ But when the die was finally cast, the King shewed more consideration for his old servant. At his final leave-taking he was much pressed to accept a pension, which had been proposed to him through Devonshire on the previous day. This offer, much to his honour, he declined (at the instance of Cumberland, it was generally believed); but he came away much gratified at his reception.²

Fox was of opinion that Bute was making a grievous mistake in parting with Newcastle before peace was made.³ His Grace would no longer have had any opportunity to be troublesome; and might have proved a convenient shield, should peace terms not result to the public liking. Fox had himself been referred to by Pitt in his speech on the vote of credit, as Newcastle's probable successor.⁴ But he had no wish to resume the cares of responsible office. His desire had been gratified. His services had at last met with their coveted reward. At the end of April, a list of new peerages was announced. Included was the name of Lady Caroline Fox. Her patent was dated

¹ Ilchester to H. Fox, May 18, 1762.

² Newcastle to Cumberland, May 26, 1762 (*Life of Rockingham*, i. 114). Also *Life of Shelburne*, i. 108.

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 64.

⁴ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 164.

May 6. She became "Lady Holland, Baroness of Holland in the county of Lincoln, and Foxley in the county of Wilts." ¹

For some years Fox's health had been steadily growing worse, though there was nothing to cause real alarm. Country sports were no longer a pleasure to him. He preferred the eating of his brother's pheasants to the trouble of shooting them.² Sea-air and sea-bathing proved the best cure for his physical ailments. He therefore indulged his "sea madness," as Cumberland called it, to the full; and looked about him for some permanent abode in which to spend his leisure hours on the shores of the English Channel. He had leased a cottage in the Isle of Purbeck at the end of 1760; and in the course of the following spring we saw him installed for some weeks near Margate. During that autumn he was minded to buy a place in Sussex. But his fancy finally led him to the north-east coast of Kent; and at the end of May 1762 he took a long lease of Kingsgate, a small house built on the edge of the cliffs near the North Foreland. By August we find him in residence there with his wife and his beloved Charles.

After a stay of a few weeks Fox found that he had realised his ideal. "My expectations cannot exceed what I have found here. Appetite, sleep, continued cheerfulness and quiet, always within 30 yards of the sea, and often in it. . . . We have been out catching whiting and trawling for flat fish almost ev'ry day."³ There was nothing pretentious about his new residence. "It is such a house, or not quite so good, as a tradesman who gets to be worth £1,000 or £1,500 builds in a country town. My remaining life," he added, "will be spent, visits excepted, between Holland House and this place. I want no other house, and I cannot believe from my

¹ H. Fox to Bute, March 1762 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 106).

² H. Fox to Ilchester, October 21, 1760.

³ H. Fox to J. L. Nicholl, August 9, 1762.

knowledge of them that Redlynch will ever suit either Lady Caroline or Ste." ¹

For besides this toy, bought for the amusement of his old age, Fox had his eye upon land which was likely to come into the market in Wiltshire and Somerset. He calculated that the purchase of a property in those localities would serve the double purpose of affording him a safe investment for his money and providing a country home for his widow or son in the future. Lady Ilchester had succeeded to Melbury on her mother's death; and her husband thought the moment propitious to sell Redlynch, his Somersetshire estate. Henry applauded his resolution, and expressed his belief that there would be no lack of purchasers when peace was declared. The place was too far from London for him to buy it himself.

"My son does not love the country or sports now; and is not likely ten years hence to love them better. He hates the notion of a seat in the country. What he thinks now signifies little, except that the fashion coincides with his present taste, and living almost wholly in town will probably grow more and more the mode." ²

To read his father's letter we should almost believe that Stephen Fox was a young man about town, and of age to know his own mind upon such matters. In reality he was not yet seventeen. Always a delicate boy, he left Eton in 1759, after a very serious illness. He was sent abroad with a tutor for the good of his health; and in March 1760 was living in Geneva under the care of the celebrated Dr Tronchin. Neither physically nor

¹ H. Fox to Ilchester, September 17, 1762.

² *Ibid.*, August 25, 1761. Ilchester seemed to have set his heart on selling Redlynch to his brother, and shewed temper when the latter bought another house in preference, near Salisbury, a few years later. It was far the best place of the two, he wrote; and, had Henry bought it, he would have been saved £2,600 a year. ¶ As it was, he did not intend to sell it to any one else, and thought his brother had treated him badly in declining his offer.

morally did the experiment prove a success. So ill did he again become a year later, that Fox made application for passports to Choiseul, the French Foreign Secretary, while peace negotiations were afoot, in order to bring him home as soon as possible. He reached England early in July.

During his stay in Geneva Ste. had been a welcome guest at "Les Délices." "I love him with all my heart," wrote its proprietor, the great Voltaire, to Fox, "not only for his father, but for himself. We are very free together; he does me the honour to come to my little *caban* when he pleases. We are to dine just now, and to drink yr health. 'Tis for me a good fortune to receive the son of the amiable and honour'd Mr Fox, who was formerly so kind to me."¹

His other friends were less desirable. The boy seems to have indulged in expensive living and high play. He launched out into a ball in January 1761, at which the arrangement of two suppers, one at midnight, the other at six in the morning, was a new fashion of his own invention.² Besides this extravagance, he was losing money to his companions at the gaming-table. "Let me advise you," wrote his father two months later,³ "to look on all foreigners who will play with you for any serious sum of money in the light of sharpers; and never play with foreigners but for the merest trifles, nor with your own countrymen for what you would be ashamed or vex'd to think you had lost."

The principles which Fox essayed to inculcate into his

¹ M. Voltaire to H. Fox, April 28, 1761. Sir G. Trevelyan, probably unaware of the docket on the back of this letter, has stated that Voltaire's visitor was Charles James Fox.

We have unfortunately no record of the occasion of Henry Fox's meeting with the man of letters. That it was early in life is clear from the mention in a letter from Hanbury-Williams in 1750, that Voltaire well remembered him.

² Lady C. Fox to S. Fox, February 5, 1761.

³ March 31, 1761

offspring were sound and sensible. But he lacked the resolution to enforce his precepts. Forgetful of the old saying, that he who spares the rod spoils the child, he believed that his sons' affection for him would keep them in the straight path. His method was to implore and to cajole, rather than to insist upon obedience. A characteristic instance in Ste.'s life at Eton must be quoted. "One thing," Fox wrote, "you know I much wanted to see—your hair cut to a reasonable and gentlemanlike shortness. You and some Eton boys wear it as no other people in the world do. It is effeminate, it is ugly, and it must be inconvenient. You gave me hopes that if I desir'd it, you would cut it. I will, dear Ste., be much obliged if you will."¹ Kindness and indulgence are admirable in moderation; but Fox carried the principle to excess. Indeed, Lady Sarah Lennox and Lady Susan Strangways in conversation many years later agreed that no young person could be much with him without being the worse for it.

"His excessive praises and flattery excited our vanity, made us many enemies, and unfitted us for any society that was not superfine. His maxim that young people were always in the right and old ones in the wrong could not and did not fail to give us a contempt for those to whom all deference was due; and when these maxims operated, his anger and displeasure was heightened by the disappointment of our not succeeding in the schemes he had laid for us."²

On this occasion, the first of many similar incidents, Stephen Fox professed penitence and good resolutions for the future. His indulgent father was satisfied and forgave him. "By the sums he has now drawn for," he wrote to Lady Caroline, "his expenses and losses must have exceeded greatly his computations or perhaps what

¹ H. Fox to S. Fox, June 10, 1758.

² Lady S. O'Brien's Journal, March 1818 (Melbury MSS.).

he cared to own. But this is not worth a thought while he is well and so very well disposed, and coming here so soon.”¹ And to his son :

“ I flatter myself you have principles of honour from which you will never depart, good nature and generosity to a great degree, and sense to perceive those errors which youth, good nature and generosity may sometimes lead and has now led you into. It shall not be my fault if love for me and gratitude don’t help your good resolutions.”

Fox was true to his promise. The boy’s debts were paid. A ball and theatricals were arranged for him at Holland House. He was taken to court, where he was well received by the King. He was fêted and made much of. Later on, we shall see in what coin he repaid his father’s confidence.

But this was not Fox’s only worry about his offspring. In September, Charles fell off his horse when galloping across the fields at Goodwood, and broke his arm. Away rushed the fond parent to see him. “ When I was sick at my stomach, I did think I shall never live to be Lord Chief Justice of England now,” was his greeting from the irrepressible boy, who was able to return to Eton some weeks later. He had been placed under the private tuition of Dr Francis, a retired schoolmaster, who after translating Horace had settled down to the more questionable occupations of a Whig pamphleteer.² Fox had

¹ H. Fox to Lady C. Fox, April 23, 1761.

² “ Yr Grace asks who wrote the pamphlet call’d, *The Opposition*. I am glad to tell yr Grace—Mr Francis, a clergyman who translated Horace and is going to publish a translation of Demosthenes. He has great learning and great parts, and is in, what has often attended both, great poverty. His only obligation to me is that I gave him a chaplainship in America, where he went, leaving his only living, which (curate paid) produces about £50 a year, for the education of his son. He was so ill he was forced to return about a week before he wrote that pamphlet. He was in the gallery during two debates. I do not know whether it is in yr Grace’s power easily to put this man out of the reach of poverty, which he do’s not deserve to labour under. If you could give him a

busied himself in trying to find a living for the divine, and early in 1762 obtained one from Lord Bute, which was subsequently supplemented by a small adjacent benefice in the gift of Lord Buckingham. The incident is of importance only to enable us to catch a glimpse of Fox's pride in the infallibility of his promises. "I do not know the man," he wrote to his brother, "in whom I ever encouraged expectation, who has not had it answer'd: which is a great, and perhaps a very singular satisfaction."

Under Francis's care Charles's studies progressed apace. His early affections were lavished on his grown-up cousin, Susan Fox-Strangways. We may quote a letter to her, written at this time:

ETON, Sunday, November 29, 1761.

"DEAR SUSAN,

"You see I do not break my promise to you, but write according to my engagement, tho' I must own, Madam, it is no easy task to write anything worthy of your Ladyship's perusal. If you ever deign to cast an eye upon the news-papers you will find that what Lady Sarah, your Ladyship and I settled in council, assembled in your closet at Goodwood (if the newspapers are allways to be believed), is about to come to pass. The article in the papers stands thus, *We hear that the Rt Honble Ly Car. Fox will shortly be created a Viscountess of Great Britain.* Well to be sure we are most deep politicians, and I think I may (without any flattery) say that no one can with more penetration discover the schemes and intentions of the great than our small council, or rather *conciliabulum*, *pour rendre la chose plus touchante*, consisting of three persons of the most approved wisdom and conduct, or as the Duke of Glo'ster expresses it *bearded wisdom and ceremonious sanctity*. But enough of nonsense. I think it was no bad guess of ours, if any credit may be given

good living you would make him happy, and me proud indeed if I were known to be the occasion of it." (H. Fox to Devonshire, January 31, 1756; Devonshire MSS.) The doctor was first introduced to Fox by Mrs Bellamy, the actress, on the evening of the failure of *Constantine*, a tragedy which he had written (*Life of Mrs Bellamy*, ii. 198).

to the papers. Our play of *Creusa* goes on swimmingly. Miss Calcraft is to act *Lycea*; I have not yet been inform'd who is to act *Pythia*. Nicoll can say all *Ilyssus* already. I shall be very proud to have such a prospering youth for my son, and shall give him very good advice, such as not to be such a prig as he is; and I venture to say he will be much improved by having such a father, though it is only for one night. Th'other day I had, in an exercise I was sent up for good for, your Ladyship's name; therefore that envious girl, your fair friend, was very angry that I had not hers instead of it. I shall conclude with asking your Ladyship how you do, and whether you do not repent of your resolution of going into the country. Lady Sarah says she regrets it very much, as well for your sake as her own, as there is (she says) a great deal of diversion going forward in town. I should not have been so impertinent to have asked your Ladyship a question you have so often expressed your aversion to, had I not observ'd that the last time I saw your Ladyship you seem'd not very well, but that may be attributed to your sorrow at parting. What Mr Macartney said after you was gone would have made you very angry if you had heard it: he said that Lady Sarah should have cried too to have kept up the form. But to be sure you must think me very tedious, after having given you hopes of an end some time past, to spin my letter out so much longer. I shall therefore conclude with subscribing myself,

“ Your Ladyship's

“ Most obedient Humble servant,

“ C. J. Fox.”

Lady Susan's absence from Holland House those Christmas holidays so upset Charles, that he would take no pains to rehearse his part in *The Revenge*, a play which the young people acted in January. She was his first great passion. Although she was six years his senior, he was wild with rage and despair at her runaway match with William O'Brien, the actor, two years later. “ She liked him better than me! Why did she like him better than me?” he repeated a hundred times to Lady Sarah

Bunbury, who, discussing the subject with Lady Susan in 1818, said, with much truth, that this had proved his first real disappointment.¹ Flattered and indulged in everything from his birth, with high spirit and strong passions, he could not bear the rebuff with equanimity. He came face to face with contradiction for the first time.

During his holidays in 1762 Charles was sitting to Reynolds for the well-known portrait, in which he is depicted at Holland House with his cousin and Lady Sarah Lennox. The latter was married by Dr Francis to Mr Bunbury, on June 2, in the private chapel at Holland House.² The bridegroom's father, Sir William, owned large estates in Suffolk, and with him the young couple at first took up their abode.

At the end of July, Fox was once again the recipient of Fortune's smiles. By the death of Dodington, who had lived but a year to enjoy his Barony of Melcombe, he succeeded to the Writership of the Tallies and Counter-tallies and the Clerkship of the Pells in Ireland for the lives of himself and two sons. The sinecure was worth some £2,500 a year. Fox had obtained the reversion in 1757 to console him for George II's refusal to grant a peerage to Lady Caroline.³ And now in one and the selfsame year both prizes had fallen to his lot. In each case he had much reason to feel grateful to Cumberland. He penned an effusive letter of thanks to his patron, and received a suitable acknowledgment.⁴

The happy relations which had so long existed between Fox and his royal friend were now drawing to a close.

¹ Lady S. O'Brien's Journal, May 2, 1818.

² During their engagement Lady Sarah was asked out to dinner by Mrs Vesey, a famous hostess of the period, without her future husband. Fox sat down and penned the following couplet, which he forwarded in the young lady's name :

" Be it known to Mrs Vesey,
Without my Bun I can't sit easy " (Waller MSS.).

³ See *ante*, ii. 43.

⁴ Cumberland to H. Fox, May 1, 1762 : " Indeed, Fox, I am obliged to those that did it, whether they did it for you or me or perhaps both."

The severance of an intimate connection of over fifteen years cannot have come to pass without many a bitter pang on both sides. Fox was accustomed to repose great faith in the Duke's advice on things both great and small : while the latter's affection for his henchman was genuine and deeply-seated. Yet their quarrel was swift. By the end of the year, as we shall see, the breach between the two men was irreparable : and Cumberland's untimely death three years later relegated reconciliation to the land beyond the grave.

Cumberland's predilection for the German war, and especially his rooted mistrust of Bute as representative of the old Leicester House party, tended to produce this unfortunate state of affairs. The nearer Fox drew to the favourite, the further Cumberland sheered off upon another tack. The Duke had become reconciled to Newcastle before the latter's downfall ; and soon even identified himself with that section of the Whig party who shared his Grace's opinion on peace and war. Of these the most important were Devonshire and Hardwicke, both of whom left the Cabinet when Bute succeeded Newcastle as First Lord of the Treasury. As time went on, Cumberland and Newcastle became " more and more united." The former grew inclined " with asperity " to opposition¹ ; and was successful in quashing the overtures which seem to have been originated during the summer by both parties for the re-establishment of Newcastle in power.²

The new Minister was slow to recognise the increasing difficulties of his position and his error in discarding Newcastle. By the time that he became alive to the facts, the opportunity had passed. His Grace was no longer to be tempted by an offer such as the Lord Presidency. For Cumberland's campaign in the country

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, pp. 61, 64.

² Stanhope's *History of England*, iv. 386 ; *Memoirs of Rockingham*, i, 118.

against peace had prospered beyond his fondest hopes. And even Hardwicke, who disliked opposition on principle unless certain of success, and who had at first looked askance on their new leader, now advocated a strenuous resistance to the court.¹

Lord Bute's elevation to the post of First Lord in May vacated his Secretaryship. George Grenville, having no relations to fear on this occasion, took his place; and subsequently frustrated an attempt to remove his brother-in-law and fellow-Secretary, Egremont, who was desired to surrender his office to Halifax.² The latter, though still Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, was installed at the Admiralty, which had been offered to Sandwich after Lord Anson's death a few days before. Sandwich was eager for the post, but dared not face the obvious disapproval of his patron, Cumberland. His promotion had been intended to clear the way for Rigby, whose claims to the Vice-Treasurership for Ireland Fox was pressing.³ Many of Newcastle's friends remained in the Government. Among them, Lord Barrington became Treasurer of the Navy, giving up the more important but less lucrative office of Chancellor of the Exchequer to Sir Francis Dashwood. This appointment came as a general surprise. Dashwood was eccentric and licentious, and, though not without knowledge of politics and the fine arts, was hopelessly ignorant of the very rudiments of finance. Fox wrote to Shelburne that he did not think it mattered much who was at the Exchequer, with Bute at the head of the Treasury and Grenville as minister in the House of Commons; and that he personally saw no objection to Dashwood.⁴

¹ *Life of Hardwicke*, iii. 361, 390.

² Von Ruville's *Life of Chatham*, iii. 58.

³ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 177; *Life of Shelburne*, i. 113.

⁴ May 23, 1762 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 113). Mr Riker seems to draw the conclusion from this passage that Fox was responsible for the appointment. There is no ground for this belief, beyond Newcastle's general statement to Devonshire that he thought Fox was "Lord Bute's

In this same letter Fox implored Shelburne for the second or third time to take office, however small the post. "It is in place I long to see you; and it is the placeman, not the independent lord, that can do his country good." But Shelburne hung back, and refused all advances. He was beginning to fathom the unreliability of Bute's character and to realise the weakness beneath the veneer which originally had so powerfully attracted him.

Notwithstanding the outbreak of war with Spain, Bute had never relinquished his hope of a treaty with France. Within a few weeks he had again involved himself in secret negotiations, in which Viry was perhaps the leading spirit as well as the intermediary. But though Choiseul's response, delivered through the medium of the Bailli Solar de Brielle, the Sardinian Minister in Paris, was disappointing, Bute made a further effort.¹ Viry was entrusted with an outline of the terms acceptable to the Minister,² and no word of these extraordinary advances to the enemy was breathed outside the select circle who were admitted to his confidence. The full Cabinet met on March 29, and, as if no previous steps had been taken, members were requested to reopen communications with Paris on the subject of peace.³ This course was adopted; and arrangements were made with France for a fresh exchange of envoys. Choiseul, however, plainly stated that he would not make peace without the concurrence of Spain. He demanded the cession of Martinique, a recent capture in the West Indies, over and above the terms of the secret arrangement, which already did not err on the side of harshness.

This question came before the Cabinet on April 23.

first adviser and agent in everything" (June 23, 1762; Add. MSS. 32,940). Indeed, Dashwood was a proved adherent of Leicester House.

¹ *Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 97.

² Newcastle to Hardwicke, March 8, 1762 (Add. MSS. 32,935).

³ Winstanley's *Personal and Party Government*, p. 116.

The ministers decided that the island should only be surrendered if Guadaloupe or Louisiana were retained by England. But at a meeting a few days later, which George Grenville, through illness, could not attend, Bute argued that they were asking too much, and persuaded a majority of his colleagues to restore Martinique without any equivalent beyond the Neutral Islands¹ and Grenada.

Choiseul's reply to the British official terms was received at the beginning of June. Newcastle's resignation had caused him many bad moments. He had visions of a new Administration with Pitt at its head, and told the Bailli Solar that he would work for peace with no one but Bute.² But that crisis was past, and Bute's complacency was bearing evil fruit. The French Minister now refused to surrender the most important of the Neutral Islands, St Lucia; and also asked that New Orleans should be included in the French sphere on the American Continent. The Cabinet met on June 21. Ministers shewed themselves distinctly adverse to any further concession. Bute began to realise how much he had lost by alienating the support of Newcastle and his friends. He spoke guardedly, but Bedford alone expressed a wish to give up the island.³

The pacific inclinations of the Cabinet were not increased by the arrogant demands of Spain, which reached England early in July. Nor did the news of Prince Ferdinand's success at Wilhelmsthal dispose them to give way. Yet on the receipt of dispatches from France, on July 24, Bute openly announced that he thought peace made, and came to the Council meeting two days later brimful of confidence. His optimism was based, not on any diminution of the French demands, but on symptoms of a growing inclination on the part of Choiseul to depart from his unwavering support of the Spaniards. Placing

¹ Tobago, Dominica, St Vincent and St Lucia.

² *Von Ruville*, iii. 74.

³ *Personal and Party Government*, p. 120.

complete faith in the integrity of the French Minister, he felt convinced that acceptance of the new terms would make peace with France secure, and that Spain would be unable to continue the struggle for a day single-handed.

But his colleagues thought otherwise. They could not bring themselves to believe that the Bourbons would throw away the advantages of the Family Compact, and suspected a trap. Bute's proposals received no support. His own Council was against him to a man. "One had one scruple, one another, G. Grenville (who, I hear, is unsupportable) had twenty; but all agreed with Lord Granville and the D. of Bedford to make no peace, without Spain acceded at the same time."¹ The meeting was adjourned for two days. Bute then got his way, by stipulating, as the price of these concessions, that France should do her utmost to bring Spain into the treaty on reasonable conditions and should pledge herself, in case of failure, to stand altogether aloof. This proposal was agreed to by all the ministers present.²

Choiseul's reply, received on August 15, was satisfactory in every respect. The Duke of Bedford and the Duc de Nivernais were therefore appointed plenipotentiaries for their respective countries. The former left England on September 6. By that time it was known that Grimaldi, the Spanish Ambassador in Paris, had been authorised to conclude a treaty on behalf of his sovereign. His power to negotiate, however, was no guarantee for his willingness to abate his demands. He believed Havanna, whither an expedition had been sent early in the year

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 69. Fox thought that Lord Bute's plan of separating France and Spain was the correct one. But his want of confidence in his own judgment again shews us too clearly how little interest he took in foreign problems. "I confess myself of Ld Bute's mind, and had I been of the Cabinet had said so; but I suppose I must be wrong, as ev'rybody else was of a different opinion; and shall therefore here say no more about it."

² Account of Devonshire's conversation, July 31, 1762 (Add. MSS. 33,000).

under Lord Albemarle, to be impregnable, and gave no evidence of any desire for an immediate settlement.

The news of the fall of the Spanish stronghold reached England on September 29. From that moment Grimaldi changed his tone. He became as eager to append his signature to the treaty as he had previously been intent on withholding it. But the peace terms had by then again passed into the hands of the British Cabinet. Bute was willing to accept them without material alteration. But his colleagues, headed by the two Secretaries of State, insisted on compensation for Havanna, which under the clauses of the treaty had automatically to be restored to Spain. Bedford raised difficulties, but was overruled by an ultimatum from the Cabinet. The objections of France and Spain which he had anticipated were not forthcoming ; and Florida was apportioned to Great Britain as an equivalent.

The preliminaries were signed by Bedford, Choiseul and Grimaldi on November 3. Canada, Nova Scotia and Cape Breton were ceded to Great Britain in their entirety. Spain gave up her claim to fishing rights in Newfoundland waters. Those of France were recognised, and the small islands of St Pierre and Miquelon were granted to her to be used as drying stations and shelters for her fishermen. England restored Martinique, Mariegalante, Guadaloupe and St Lucia to France, retaining the remainder of the Neutral Islands and Grenada. Spain permitted the British to cut logwood on the coast of Honduras, but not to erect fortifications. She handed over Florida in exchange for Havanna, being compensated by France by the cession of Louisiana. Manila was also restored to its former owners: the news of its capture having arrived after the preliminaries had been signed. In the Old World, Minorca was exchanged for Belleisle. The fortifications of Dunkirk were demolished. The frontiers of Portugal were reinstated. British and French troops were withdrawn from Germany. France ceded Senegal, and retained the settle-

ment of Goree. In India, both countries reverted to their respective possessions in 1749.

The peace was thoroughly advantageous to Great Britain. It laid the foundation of her colonial empire. But the nation might fairly have expected even greater benefits than were obtained. British concessions were made at the expense of her conquests. Except Minorca, France had no captured territories to surrender. The nation was tired and war-worn ; a cessation of hostilities was eminently desirable. Yet the same remarks applied to France in a far greater degree ; and it seems probable that further sacrifices could have been wrung from Choiseul without difficulty by a firmer and more skilful hand than that which was guiding the helm of the state.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE favourite's path was strewn with pitfalls. At first he does not seem to have realised the difficulties which beset him on every side. "Lord Bute, if he concludes peace, expects no obstacle worth mentioning," wrote Shelburne to Fox on August 14.¹ He was living in a fool's paradise, from which the awakening could not be long delayed.

Neither his intellect nor his political training fitted Bute to undertake the solution of these complicated problems. To counteract his deficiencies he had recourse to underhand methods of diplomacy, without the skill requisite to conceal his tracks. His letter to Choiseul, urging him to shew a firmer front to Prince Ferdinand after the battle of Wilhelmsthal, and his advances to Russia and Austria behind King Frederick's back, were expedients of too dangerous a nature for any but a past master in the art of intrigue. Small wonder that a charge of personal corruption, unjustifiable as it proved, was preferred against him some years later in the House of Commons.²

At the end of August he had three special reasons for perturbation.³

The first and least important point was the English right to cut logwood on the coast of Honduras.

The second was the question of a cessation of arms

¹ This letter is dated August 10, and is so quoted in the *Life of Shelburne*. Subsequent correspondence proves that it was written four days later.

² *Stanhope*, iv. 409. See also *von Ruville*, iii. 74, 76.

³ Shelburne to H. Fox, September 1, 1762.

between the English and French in Germany. It is a matter for some surprise to discover any hesitation on Bute's part in dealing with the latter subject ; for it was part and parcel of his policy to leave Austria and Prussia to fight out their own quarrel by themselves. But he had already offended Prince Ferdinand ¹ ; and was seemingly apprehensive that complaints of lost opportunities would be made against him, should the preliminaries fail by any chance to materialise.

Fox as usual displayed the superficial interest which he took in such matters, when appealed to by Shelburne.

" You do not say what the affair of the logwood is, so I can make no judgment of it. If it is only an immediate cession of these settlements, which we have no sort or pretence of right to, I think it is to our honour. A cessation of arms, if the preliminaries are as fixed as I imagined, cannot be a question. If indeed we are only treating with a probability of being forced to declare off and continue the war, it is another question and what I am no judge of." ²

Of far greater concern to him was Lord Bute's third cause for preoccupation. This was on a question of general policy. Bute was in doubt about the best method of laying the peace before Parliament. Should he present the preliminaries, or wait till the Definitive Treaty was signed ? The former course was open to the least objection. But if he was to adopt it, he must secure the conclusion of the preliminaries before the meeting of Parliament ; and the commencement of the session could not be postponed later than the middle of November. Unless he was able to produce the articles signed as a whole, his enemies had it in their power to debate them

¹ Bute seems to have thwarted Prince Ferdinand's operations in every possible way. The latter openly accused him to his friend Lord Granby, of being his personal enemy, and of using him "*cruelly*" (*Life of Hardwicke*, iii. 400).

² H. Fox to Shelburne, September 4, 1762.

piecemeal, and to endanger the whole treaty. We have only to realise how absolutely necessary this was for the success of his schemes, to comprehend the motive for his feverish haste. Yet Bute was woefully mistaken in his belief that peace was likely to bring popularity to the Crown. He had reckoned on the war-weariness of the nation. So far his judgment was correct. But he had not taken into account his own unpopularity; he had failed to appreciate the storm which was gathering over his head. In the main, Fox was correct in his assertion that opposition to peace was aimed chiefly at Lord Bute. "It is against the man, not the measure, that the fury is directed, and that by some who were more for peace than he is and in their hearts approve it more than he does."¹ He was "a favourite and a Scotchman."

"It would be very surprizing to see how quick and fiercely the fire spreads, but for the consideration that it is fed with great industry and blown by a national prejudice which is inveterate and universal. Every man has at some time or other found a Scotchman in his way, and everybody has therefore damn'd the Scotch; and this hatred their excessive nationality has continually inflamed. A peace is thought necessary to Lord Bute; therefore a peace or any suppos'd terms is exclaim'd against."²

Bute was an object of hatred and contempt. His phenomenal rise to the highest power in the state was looked on with suspicion. His reputed connection with the Princess Dowager was common property. And far from being able to assist him, King George came in for his own share of popular censure. Fox wrote:

"A young, civil, virtuous, good-natur'd King might naturally be expected to have such a degree of popularity as should for years defend the most exceptionable fav'rite.

¹ H. Fox to Ilchester, September 5, 1762. ² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 68.

But, which I can't account for, H.M. from the very beginning was not popular." ¹

Yet the light shed by subsequent history leads us to believe that there was something more involved than the personal side of the question. The flame against Bute was fanned by Cumberland, by Prince Ferdinand's affianced bride, Princess Augusta, and by the younger members of the royal family, by Pitt and Temple, by the discontented Whigs under Newcastle, by their pamphleteers and by their cartoonists. The sullen growlings of the storm must have reached the Minister's ears. He had ample warning of the danger which he had to face. But his omission to profit by the advantages which accrued from new triumphs in the field was the spark which set alight the blaze in the country. Men craved for peace, it is true: but for a peace worthy of the sacrifices which they had made—a settlement adequate to their successes on land and sea. By degrees the light dawned on the nation that, but for the Minister's indifference, better terms might have been obtained. Then rose a tempest before which the boldest would have quailed. And Bute, terrified at its violence, would fain have laid down his burden long before his task was accomplished, could he but have obtained the King's permission to do so.

The crisis in the Cabinet after the fall of Havanna first awoke the Minister from his dream. He stood to lose every semblance of power and authority, if he allowed himself to be flouted and dictated to in his own Council. He rose to the occasion, and determined to remove George Grenville, who was clearly indicated as the ringleader of the disaffected coterie. The point at issue between the two men was not solely the justification for an equivalent for Britain's new conquest. Upon this Bute was quite willing to yield. But Grenville's request for a free hand

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 76.

in dealing with members of the House of Commons, and his demand that the articles of peace should be approved by Parliament before they were signed, convinced the First Lord of the immediate necessity for a change.¹

On September 29, the very afternoon that the good news was received from the West Indies, Bute had quite by chance met Fox at dinner with the Duchess of Bedford. At his request, the Paymaster gave him an outline of Cumberland's views on peace and war.

Fox had had two recent opportunities of priming himself with the Duke's sentiments. An outspoken conversation with Devonshire at the end of July possibly accounted for the first summons which he received. Fox had been upbraided by his old associate for giving his support to Bute. He replied that he was acting on his own opinion. He believed in the necessity for peace, approved of the terms, and was against the German war. He knew, he said, that his ideas were contrary to those of the Duke, but was not aware that he had earned his displeasure.²

Fox was sent for on August 3, just as he was starting for Kingsgate. He spoke of Bute's optimism, but was unable to convince Cumberland that it was well founded.

"His wishes were against it, because it might establish Lord Bute. And to hurt Lord Bute (I am sorry to write what follows, because of the love and honour I have for him), tho' he approves the terms, he will join with the loudest in condemning them."³

Fox felt convinced that his patron had some ulterior motive in his incredulity, and feared that he must offend him in the next session, if he acted an honest part. "If I do, it shall be his fault, for I will only speak my mind and, if he would own it, his mind too, upon this peace."⁴

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 194; *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 135.

² Newcastle's Memorandum, August 2, 1762 (Add. MSS. 33,000).

³ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 69.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

For nearly two months Fox remained quietly in Kent. On September 27, he received a request for a second interview. Cumberland added :

“ After a week’s show and pomp, serious considerations revert, and I am very sorry to say the storms are very black and almost ready to burst. And if they once do, moderate men will no longer be able to prevent party and violence. I dread the times.”

Fox went post-haste to Windsor, whence he returned to London, as we have seen, on the 29th.¹ Only scanty details are available of the incidents of the visit.

“ When the Duke of Cumberland sent for me, it was to propose a message for me to carry to Lord Bute, which, in delivering it, he found so silly (and indeed it was extremely so), that he would not send it.”²

Fox, notwithstanding, seems to have been commissioned to find out whether Bute had still any intention of re-enlisting Newcastle’s services, or of making any advances to Pitt ; for he wrote a long letter to the Duke that same evening, after seeing Bute at Bedford House.³ The latter had confided to him the conditions which he had hoped would have proved generally acceptable, had not Grenville refused to sign without compensation for Hayanna. Fox wrote that Bute had shewn no desire to “ treat ” with his opponents ; though the former expressed the belief that he would be driven to it. In that case, he personally hoped, he said, to see His Royal Highness in the position of mediator. He stated that he had answered Bute’s queries about Cumberland’s sentiments as best he could.

¹ Not on the 30th, as stated in Fox’s *Memoir*.

² Fox’s *Memoir*, p. 80.

³ The letter is printed in *Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 128. The information given by Cumberland to Newcastle in their conversation on October 1 (October 3, Add. MSS. 32,943) is chiefly based upon it,

"I told him that your Royal Highness always was and would be very sensible of the King's civilities, for you loved him; and that I believed your Royal Highness had rather any minister made a good peace than his Lordship; but I was persuaded you had rather even his Lordship made it than that it should not be made at all."

Cumberland's reply to this lengthy epistle was perfectly cordial.

"In the madness of joy I am now in,¹ I am very unfit to answer a letter of so important and serious a nature as that I this moment receiv'd from you. Though we may not think alike, yet I am [sure] your thoughts and advice are sincere, and you know well that what comes from you always has its weight with me."²

But on reflection the Duke changed his tone. He shewed himself nettled at Fox's outspoken reference to his relations with Bute, and asked him to explain away the personal element which his remarks had introduced.³

Next day, Fox had a further interview with Bute, and left in the afternoon for Kingsgate accompanied by Rigby and the Duchess of Bedford. The latter was on her way to join her husband in Paris.⁴ Fox's intention had been to remain in the country for ten days, but an express from Lord Bute, dated the 4th, brought him hurrying back again on the 6th.

On the following morning, he was sent for by the King. We have an account of the audience in his own words:

"I was sent for by express from the sea side this day se'ennight, and told that H.M. was in great distress on finding Mr Grenville unwilling or unable (or perhaps half one, half the other) to go on as his minister in the H. of Commons. He flatter'd himself that having ever had the best and honestest affections for his people and their

¹ On account of the news from Havanna.

² Cumberland to H. Fox. "Recd Sept. 30, 1762."

³ Cumberland to Devonshire, October 15, 1762 (Devonshire MSS.).

⁴ *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 131.

representatives, there were enough ready to approve those measures which he should lay before them, and particularly that peace which he hop'd he was on the point of concluding and thought safe and honourable. The danger he foresaw arose from want of a proper person to be his minister amongst them, and the danger arising from this might be great ; and believed there were those who hop'd to find occasion to force the closet, infringe on his liberty, who never had a thought of invading theirs, and disgrace him in the eyes of the whole world. He believed I was not only the proper person, but the only proper person to take upon me his support in the H. of Commons. That he was mistaken in my character, if thus call'd upon I could refuse him to be Secretary of State ; with all the power, &c., &c., &c., which for his own sake (as well as from the sense of obligation he should ever feel himself under to me) he would most gladly give me. I was never in my life in so much anxiety as this has put me into. I soon said that part of what was requir'd of me was impossible ; my declining health would not admit of my taking the seals and acting a busy part in the H. of Commons too. That my being his minister there would immediately greatly add to that unpopularity of which Ld Bute had full enough already. That of those who might be willing to support him, many, particularly of the Torys, might revolt at my name. That the experiment was dangerous, and if it fail'd, H.M. would be the worse for having try'd it. To give up my health and ease for his service was my duty and would be an honour to me, but it ought to be well considered, before I was commanded to what might probably do harm instead of good. I was still press'd in all the obliging and most pathetick terms, and indulg'd, tho' unwillingly, in my objection to the seals." ¹

There is no evidence to shew that any proposal was made to Fox before this date. Bute had cancelled the Cabinet Council appointed for October 4 ; after Grenville and Egremont had been called in to receive a castigation

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire, October 12, 1762 (Devonshire MSS.). Compare also H. Fox to Bedford, October 13 (*Bedford Corres.*, iii. 133).

from the King for their insubordination, and had shewn fight.¹ He feared to give the recalcitrant Secretaries an opportunity to attack him openly. Then, and not till then, it was that he decided upon introducing a new lieutenant into the House of Commons. The point is of some importance, as Fox has been blamed for concealing previous offers from Cumberland during his visit to Windsor.² The accusation is unfounded.³ Fox made no allusion whatever to any offer in the letter which he penned to Shelburne on October 4. Nor do we find any inclination to fresh activities. "When I do come to town," he had written, "I dare say I shall hate the bustle I shall find there so much that in two or three days I shall fly from it to my brother's." ⁴ And he spoke of "halcyon days such as ministers can have," without any marked desire to partake of their delights.⁵

But though Fox had not been actually approached to take upon himself new responsibilities, he had every day been identifying himself more closely with the Minister and his policy. He had been continually solicited by Bute for advice on the tactics which were to be pursued in Parliament. "You may advise Lord Bute from me," he wrote to Shelburne, "to make sure of as many individuals as may be engaged between this and the meeting of the House of Commons, and many may be more easily engaged than they can be after it is met." ⁶

¹ *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 132. See *ante*, ii. 181, 186.

² *Riker*, ii. 249.

³ The charge is based on a letter from Shelburne to Fox, vaguely dated "September 1762" (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 120), stating, "that every step possible was taken to prepossess Fox in favour of what was proposed, and that he did not think he could refuse taking on him the lead of the House of Commons." We are convinced that this was not written till the early days of October, *i.e.* after the King's offer; for Lord Fitzmaurice has correctly assumed a close connection between it and Fox's memorandum to Shelburne, which he subsequently quotes without dates. A copy of the latter paper is at Holland House docketed, "October 8."

⁴ H. Fox to J. L. Nicholl, September 15, 1762.

⁵ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 118.

⁶ H. Fox to Shelburne, August 16, 1762 (*ibid.*, p. 117).

Fox's letter to Shelburne of October 4 is so valuable an expression of his sentiments, that we print it *in extenso*.¹

"I am sorry to think, but I do think, that peace cannot be made now without asking something for restoring ye Havannah. That something will not be readily granted, and delay is of the utmost ill consequence. That something too will be of no use to us if we get it, and yet I think it must be asked. The Secretary won't, and I doubt whether the D. of Bedford will, sign, without trying to get some sort of equivalents. The D. of Cumberland's opinion to the King (which I am surprised at and sorry to hear), I can only look upon as the first step towards taking with the D. of Newcastle &c. hold of the point that he thought might be carried perhaps against Lord Bute, I must admit with the greatest prospect of success. I wish Lord Albemarle was here! . . .

"Now as to the point on which Lord Bute desir'd my thoughts. I have given my thoughts, but having no parliamentary book or body to consult, I cannot form an opinion. Was I Minister and had a Cabinet Council to propose the measure to, that consisted of persons who had weight and courage, I would certainly propose what I think best for the King and his people, and pursue it without previously consulting Parliament. But besides what has lately appear'd of irresolution, the Cabinet is composed of persons who bring no weight to the scale of Government either of authority or connections. Nothing can make them of use but firm and resolute and persevering and unanimous attachment to the King's measure and Minister. And you know how little they have of this in their natures.

"I should be glad then in this ugly situation to have the sense of Parliament. Not for security, but to remove difficulties. The objection to its letting down Government is obviated by its having been done before, and in times when procrastination was carry'd high. And it would obviate the great difficulty, because the greatest coward would sign when the Parliament authoriz'd, without considering that he was not secur'd by it.

¹ Lansdowne MSS,

“ But now, on the other side, not seeing the precedent, I cannot imagine how the sense of Parliament can be taken. And by taking it, you subject yourselves to as many questions as there are articles to the preliminaries, and if any one question is carry’d, or is defeated, by a great majority, the whole is marr’d ; unless France and Spain, who I believe will not like to see their offer presented to the House of Commons *sub spe rata*, will go further, and submit to our alterations to it. How difficult will it be to keep the attention of a number of men upon the whole, thro’ so many questions on particular articles. Friends, I should fear, would leave us on some. From the nature of opposition none from the other side would come to us on any. And upon the whole I have no idea of a House of Commons turn’d into a Council of State. What then is my opinion ? I tell you I can give none.

“ These are my thoughts, and as soon as I come to Holland House, which will be next Saturday night, I will look up the year 1711-12.¹ I cannot think I shall find it exactly as I believe it was stated to Lord Bute.”

Neither the memorandum which Fox wrote for Shelburne on October 8, nor the letter which followed two days later,² gives us any fresh reason for this momentous change in his life. Unfortunately the bulk of his correspondence with his brother at this time is missing. One letter alone remains, written to Ilchester on October 9.

“ I have received your return to my express. It is very kind, but I wish it had been more decisive.

“ If I can carry through this clamorous sessions, you ask *cui bono* ? Pray explain the meaning of that question. To the King and the public it would be useful & should be meritorious. To my nearest friends (I want nothing for myself) it would certainly be useful too.”

He consulted some of his intimates. He called on

¹ The resemblance of the circumstances to those of the Treaty of Utrecht is very marked. See Lecky's *History of England*, iii. 44.

² Printed in *Life of Shelburne*, i. 120, 121.

Mr Campbell, of Cawdor, and wrote to Mr Nicholl,¹ one of the permanent officials at the Pay Office, and to Calcraft. Nicholl strongly urged him to take the Secretaryship as well as the lead in the House of Commons, and hinted that the place above all others in which he would like to see Fox was the Treasury.² Calcraft besought him not to withhold his assistance, for his motive in refusing might be misconstrued. "Was you to decline," he wrote, "the malevolent world would be apt to impute this to ingratitude and the desire of being quiet in the more lucrative employment, without any other consideration than your own family."³

Fox seems to have been swept off his feet by the complaints and entreaties of his sovereign; and was constrained, though not without misgivings, to step into the breach. The Secretaryship he refused out of hand. "The rest was insisted on," he wrote to Bedford, "or rather asked, in such terms and in such a manner, that, in short, I was brought to feel it a point of honour to obey. I am very sure that is my motive, because I have nothing either to wish or ask, and most unhappy to leave the quiet life I enjoyed, and shall, I fear, find it was necessary to my health."⁴ The prospect of a free hand in the management of the House of Commons may have proved some temptation, and Fox may have felt a certain sense of obligation to regard Lady Caroline's peerage in the light of a retaining fee. But his inclination was certainly to remain in retirement, and in the sequel his better judgment proved correct. Would he have come

¹ John Luke Nicholl, not to be confounded with John Nichols, the publisher, with whom Lord Fitzmaurice identifies him as an intimate friend of Horace Walpole.

² The letter is printed in *Life of Shelburne*, i. 122. There is a copy of it in Colonel Barré's handwriting at Lansdowne House. Lord Fitzmaurice places the letter as subsequent to Fox's interview with Cumberland on October 11. It must have been written on the 9th or 10th, for Fox's reply, dated Sunday, October 10, is at Holland House.

³ J. Calcraft to H. Fox, October 10, 1762.

⁴ H. Fox to Bedford, October 13, 1762 (*Bedford Corres.*, iii. 134).

forward with the same alacrity had he realised the King's real sentiments towards him? "We must call in bad men to govern bad men," said His Majesty to Grenville within a few days of the scene in which he had gone on his knees to win Fox's aid.¹ The incident will scarcely be quoted as a pleasing specimen of royal gratitude!

Although his mind was practically made up, Fox gave the court no definite reply until after an interview which he had asked of Cumberland.

"I shall see the D. of Cumberland to-morrow, and after that determine, which I believe will be as I have said; tho' the consequence may be a breach with him. That will be unpleasant, but in this case, when you know it, you will not think that fear ought to bias me. I am, and shall be, I am afraid, in a great deal of trouble." ²

In the meanwhile, he made no secret of the dangers which he foresaw would arise from his unpopularity. He conjured Bute to think well before he attempted so hazardous an experiment. To employ him might be to wreck the whole cause. For himself, he looked on the bad opinion of the public with complete disregard. It was of little concern to him. Nor does he seem to have troubled to fathom the reasons for this disrepute.

"You won't allow the treatment I have met with to be very singular. That must be from not attending to the periods at which it began and has been most violent. I never was abus'd to any degree till I resign'd and put myself out of the way, and offer'd to put myself out of the possibility of competition. I sate silent five whole sessions. Abuse did not quite subside and at the end of them flames out again as you see. When was any man before so treated, who was neither of the court nor of the Cabinet? Nay when was any man so treated, who never had, tho' but for a minute, the direction of either?"

¹ *Grenville Papers*, i. 452.

² H. Fox to Ilchester, October 9,

Which has been my case. But let this subject, like my new stables, be reserved for conversation.”¹

Fox was fully alive to the aversion of the Tories ; and he knew that the Scots had always looked askance at him on account of his connection with Cumberland. But the real grounds for this prevailing hatred appear never to have entered his head. He was not ashamed to pocket interest gained by means of the public funds, because he did not look upon it as wrong to do so. He had been brought up among politicians who regarded such perquisites as the meet reward for their labours. He made no attempt to disguise his proceedings ; for he considered that there was nothing to conceal. Indeed, it has been well said that he was the reflection of his age.

Fox's conversation with the Duke took place on October 11. Our information regarding it is somewhat contradictory. Fox wrote, “He was excessively good and kind and friendly to Mr Fox ; he said nothing to encourage the minister. However I think I act on principles which he taught me.”² Next, we have Cumberland's own account, written to Devonshire on October 15.³ In this he spoke of finding the plan quite altered. He had understood before he left for Newmarket that Bute had given up all idea of the peace, as no Secretary would sign it.⁴ Now he found that it would be carried through ; and that his own last conversation in the closet was termed “change of language.” Fox had proceeded to announce his promotion, “mixed with a great desire both of his own, and *I think of Ld Bute's*, that there might be a coalition with the D. of Newcastle ; but by that coalition he, Ld Bute, was still to keep the Treasury and the great

¹ H. Fox to J. L. Nicholl, September 7, 1762.

² H. Fox to Devonshire, October 12.

³ Devonshire MSS.

⁴ This is certainly not the impression which we obtain from Bute's conversations and correspondence with Fox.

power.”¹ The Duke said that Fox expressed a hope that their friendship would not be interrupted by his action, which should be attributed to a sense of duty not to choice. He had replied that Fox would certainly not find his doors shut, but he feared that the court might object to their intercourse, and that “conversations would grow mighty dull when under such restraints.”

Cumberland had a long conversation with Newcastle on October 19. He brought out no new points about Fox, but the bias which he introduced into his story was unmistakable.²

On the other hand, the impression which we obtain from Shelburne's correspondence with Fox and Bute gives a different tone to the picture.³ Shelburne received an account of the interview from Fox's own lips later the same day, and subsequently informed Bute of what had passed. At the same time, he handed him Nicholl's letter to Fox. This, as we have already seen, embodied a far more sweeping proposal than that which had been actually made to the Paymaster. We seem to infer from Shelburne's letters that some similar suggestion had emanated from the Duke, namely, that Bute should give up the Treasury to Fox and should retire into private life loaded with titles and rewards. Bute also wrote: “I return the enclosed,⁴ after having thoroughly weighed the contents of it, as well as the suggestion of the Duke of Cumberland that corresponds with it. . . .”

Fox had shewn no alacrity to welcome Nicholl's conception.⁵ Nor does he seem to have given a thought to Cumberland's plan, whatever it was. This much is plain. It does, nevertheless, seem curious that no reference to anything of the kind can be drawn from the Duke's narratives, though he may purposely have avoided any

¹ This was the everlasting complaint. Cumberland would not stomach Bute having “sole power.”

² Newcastle's Memorandum, October 19, 1762 (Add. MSS. 32,943).

³ Printed in *Life of Shelburne*, i. 124 *et seq.*

⁴ Nicholl's letter.

⁵ H. Fox to J. L. Nicholl, Sunday [October 10], 1762.

such disclosure to his friends ; and Fox's remark that Cumberland did not " encourage the minister," does not lead us to conjure up visions of conciliatory advances. Yet it is clear from Fox's protestations that the true meaning of some observation of the Duke was mistaken by Shelburne and Bute.¹ Can it be that the misconception arose on this very point ? In any case we cannot credit Lord Fitzmaurice's suggestion that Fox's refusal to accede to the Duke's proposal brought about the final breach between them.²

Bute expressed much gratification at Fox's " very handsome conduct," and his praises were duly passed on by Shelburne. " The more I reflect on Mr Fox's conduct at this crisis, the more I admire the noble and generous manner in which he quits retirement and security to stand with me the brunt of popular clamour, in supporting the best of Princes against the most ungenerous, the most ungrateful set of men the country ever produced." ³ Bute appears to have closely considered the question of his retirement, and for the moment to have come to the conclusion that it would be detrimental to the best interests of his master. " If the storm thickens and danger menaces, let me stand foremost in the ranks ; I claim the post of honour, and will now for the first time fling away my scabbard."

Fox was never for half measures. He supplemented his acceptance of office with a declaration of the line he intended to follow.

" The part is taken, you shall hear no more of fears ;

¹ " I don't doubt you did me more than justice ; but whether you did quite as much justice to H.R.H.ss, I a little doubt, and must make up for your supposed deficiency.

" I gave him up when I thought he was doing wrong. Pray allow me to vindicate him, when I can say with truth that I believe his honest heart and good understanding never suffer'd him to intend what we suppos'd" (H. Fox to Shelburne, October 12, 1762; Lansdowne MSS.).

² *Life of Shelburne*, i. 122.

³ Bute to Shelburne (*ibid.*, i. 127).

I shall not deceive you, but nobody else shall see that I am not fond of my situation. I am quite sure I shall please my superiors ; it is a chance as to others (particularly Tories), but the dye is thrown and I will stand the hazard as if I had thrown it myself.”¹

He kissed hands on October 13, “a Cabinet Councillor and His Majesty’s minister in the House of Commons.” The phraseology is especially significant. His reception in the closet was “perhaps the most gracious man ever met with.”²

Important changes in the Administration followed. On the 9th, George Grenville was informed that he must resign his seals ; although he had been assured by Bute on the preceding day that no thought of change was in contemplation.³ The proposal was made to him that the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Halifax, should exchange places with him ; and that Fox in future should lead the House of Commons. Grenville protested in most vehement language to both the King and Bute, and predicted the ill success of the plan. The latter temporised. He had no wish to drive Grenville into opposition. Notwithstanding his outward display of courage, he spoke of his own desire to retire from public life, a fact which he had been careful to conceal from his new lieutenant ; and was able to win Grenville’s acceptance of the post, by a hint that the reversion of the Treasury might be his when peace became an accomplished fact.⁴

Once installed, Fox wasted no time in approaching his friends for their support. He knew Cumberland’s opinion too well to be sanguine of success in that quarter. The best he could hope, was to induce the Duke to take a neutral part, and to persuade him to refrain from open opposition. Their relations, though very strained, had not yet reached breaking point. Each thought the other

¹ H. Fox to Shelburne, October 12.

² *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 134 ; H. Fox to W. Ellis, October 14, 1762.

³ *Grenville Papers*, i. 451, 483.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i. 482.

in the wrong. Fox was as powerless to bring over his former patron to the court, as was the latter to replace the lost sheep in the Whig fold. Yet Fox still resented, and could not make up his mind to believe, Bute's insinuations that Cumberland was surreptitiously intriguing against the King.

"I always told your Lordship, if Mr Fox connected himself with you, His Royal Highness could not prevail to make him do anything contrary to the spirit of his engagements with you, but I never said that Mr Fox's judgment of the Duke was to be taken. He feels that the Duke dishonours himself by such a conduct as you describe, and therefore halts to think it possible. . . .

"This is the case, not only with the regard to the Duke, but with anyone whom he has lived in friendship with, which you will find him, as I have often assured your Lordship, most uncommonly sincere in." ¹

Cumberland made short work of Fox's proposals, which included a tentative suggestion that he should become head of the army.² He wrote to Hardwicke :

"Instead of advancing too fast, your Lordship will see that I have given a peremptory refusal to the overtures that have been made to me. Those by my Lord Halifax, I am sensible, as far as relates to himself, were meant with all the friendship, affection and respect imaginable. Those flung out by Mr Fox you will all have in your turns. His view is to create jealousies amongst us, and to divide us. I thank God he has failed in his great attempt, and that will sufficiently mortify him." ³

Cumberland worked with varying success to stiffen the backs of his followers and new associates against the blandishments of Mr Fox and his tools, amongst whom Calcraft was considered specially formidable.⁴ Sandwich

¹ Shelburne to Bute, November 4, 1762 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 135).

² Newcastle's Memorandum, October 19.

³ October 21, 1762 (*Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 134).

⁴ *Ibid.*, i. 148.

was easily lured away with the promise of the Ambassadorship in Madrid.¹ The Duke of Rutland, on whose resignation the Duke set great store, gave no sign of throwing up his post of Master of the Horse. His son, Lord Granby, too, sent his promise of support from Germany,² without waiting for the complimentary phrases which Fox showered on him.³ And Lord Barrington, to whom Newcastle looked for support and sympathy, retained his office without heed to his obligations to his Grace.

On the other hand, Lord Waldegrave made a definite request that no offer should be made to him by the King ; although he allowed that he was perfectly satisfied with the proposed terms of peace. " I can hope," he wrote, " for little encouragement at a place where I am under no engagement, yet where a disapprobation of my conduct would give me great uneasiness." ⁴ Newcastle was equally stubborn. Fox was undeniably prejudiced against his employment, and certainly made him no personal overtures. But negotiations conducted by Halifax seem to have been undertaken with his consent and approval.⁵

There remained Devonshire. The letter to him, containing Fox's description of his interview with the King, which has been already transcribed, further embodied a personal justification, and a request for future support.

" How this will be thought of by yr Grace I don't know. But I have this to justify it to myself. I felt, and time will shew, that I have nothing to ask or wish for myself.

¹ Walpole states that his defection was the last straw, and that from this moment the breach between Cumberland and Fox was irreparable.

² Granby to H. Fox, November 1, 1762.

³ " Mr Fox says : ' If the Duke of Rutland's behaviour warrants it, let him be summoned to the *Conciliabulum* ; and let Lord Granby, by your Lordship (meaning me), Calcraft and others, be made more drunk with praise than ever he was with champagne ' " (Shelburne to Bute, November 4).

⁴ Waldegrave to H. Fox, October 17, 1762. Fox had obtained Bute's leave to propose Cabinet rank (Bute to H. Fox, October 16, 1762).

⁵ Add. MSS. 32,913. See also Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 198.

It may be a mistaken duty ; but sense and a generous sense of duty too, is, I vow to God, my motive to this unpleasant step. To see the King forced to part with a minister, and professedly not for any measure to hear H.M. told not only who should not, but, which till this year was never attempted, who should be his minister, I could not help wishing to prevent. I could point out no other ; he could think of no other help, and I could not refuse to risk myself and go to his assistance. The event I do not know, but my sincere and great unwillingness is such as could not yield to anything but what I thought 'point of honour' and duty, and therefore I am sure I cannot repent of it. . . .

"How happy would it be for the King ! the country ! (and indeed particularly for me !) if you great ones, I don't except the D. of N. and Ld Hardwicke, would come again to places at court and Council, and give your weight and authority to such a peace as you should approve, at the same time restoring it to the people so mad at present with faction here, as far as your authoritys could restore it. Were this to be the case, how could it be said Ld Bute is sole Minister ? "

Devonshire's reply, written from Bath, where he was taking the waters, was frank and outspoken.¹

"The long friendship I have had for you, as well as the strongest love and regard, wou'd make it base in me to dissemble upon this occasion. I lament the crisis that has occasion'd your being call'd upon, and which makes you think it incumbent on you to undertake the task ; and hope in what I am going to say I may prove a false prophet. Don't take it ill, when I tell you that in my poor opinion you are doing what is ill-judged and dangerous for yourself, will do Lord Bute no good, and be of no service to the King's affairs. The nation is mad, and ready to break out in a flame ; your junction at this time with Lord Bute will rather tend to inflame than quench the fire. My heart bleeds for the King. I know the

¹ October 14, 1762. We make no apology for printing this correspondence in full, in view of the charge, which is sometimes made against Fox, of having engineered Devonshire's dismissal.

duty I owe as a faithful servant and subject, and have besides a love and affection to his person. I dread the event you so pathetically describe. Lord Bute, who has such obligations to the King and is the only man that can avert the blow, ought to take warning in time; or it will not be in the power of those who detest such measures to prevent them. I beg this may be to yourself.

"I fear you will be the dupe in this business; they never offer'd you anything till they had nobody else to go to. Why are you then to take Lord Bute's unpopularity on your shoulders? You may fancy what you please about the power of the Crown, but believe me you will find yourself mistaken. If a King of England employs those people for his ministers that the nation have a good opinion of, he will make a great figure; but if he chuses them merely thro' personal favour, it will never do, and he will be unhappy. In this instance, Ld Bute has his birth. *Per contra*, no man has wish'd more to see you a minister than myself, but not in such company, and this step of yours has, I own, cut up by the roots every chance that I cou'd form to myself of making some settlement and preventing confusion. When I sat down to write, I did not intend to say what I have. Don't be angry, for believe me it comes from a heart that loves you and feels for you. I am, with great truth, and will ever shew myself dear Mr Fox's sincere friend,

DEVONSHIRE.

"I hope to pass thro' London in a week or ten days, and shall be glad to see you. Commend me to your son, Charles, for his sagacity. By part of the conversation in your letter it seems as if the peace wou'd take place; if you don't get some compensation for ye Havannah you will be tore to pieces."

Fox's next letter shews no sign of pique or annoyance—a fact which should be carefully borne in mind.

Octr 16, 1762.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"Let me know when yr Grace comes to town, and I will immediately wait upon you and convince yr Grace

that I take most kindly, so far from taking ill, what you so have been pleas'd to say to me. If I have been mistaken in thinking I was oblig'd in point of honour to do as I have done, I am to be pity'd. But whilst I continue to think I was not mistaken, I cannot repent of it. What yr Grace only hints, I assure you I urg'd most strongly—that my name would encrease beyond measure, and more than anything else could do, the unpopularity of the Administration. If I am the dupe, it must be of my own opinion, when I thought I was oblig'd in order to undertake this. For it was not my inclination nor hope of advantage that induc'd me, and I had many things to discourage me. One, and not of the least weight, was that I did not expect yr Grace's approbation. Danger to myself was not, nor is not in my thoughts. I took care to put all advantage to myself out of the case too, and though what I have done against my inclination may be wrong, I can always say that to me it appear'd right and to be my duty. Indeed, my dear Lord, I not only did not want to be a minister, but wish'd and resolved not to be one. So that if yr Grace could have formed a Ministry, I would have excus'd myself; as nothing but necessity or what appear'd to me to be necessity, could have made me so. If H.M. is to make his ministers, not from his own but the good opinion the nation have of them, Mr Pitt and Ld Temple must be his ministers now, and who next year I cannot judge.

“Peace cannot be made without a compensation for the Havannah. The King thinks it will be granted; I wish it may, tho' I do not flatter myself that any peace that Pitt do's not make will go down, or the best not equally be abus'd with the worst. Whoever makes it must be able to justify it to himself thoroughly, and must be content with that. But without some compensation for the Havannah, it must not be, I grant. Not for fear of being tore to pieces, my Lord, for whoever has that fear can have no rule of action.”¹

Devonshire replied on October 21. He expressed his delight that Fox had received his advice so well, and

¹ Devonshire MSS.

asked him to make his excuses to the King for not attending the Council meeting on the 25th. He had been confined to the house for ten days, and was unfit as yet to make the journey.

Though still a member of the Cabinet in his capacity of Lord Chamberlain, Devonshire had ceased, by the King's permission, to be present at meetings after Newcastle's retirement. On October 3, however, he had received a note from Egremont containing a special summons from His Majesty to attend the Council.¹

The session was an extraordinary one to discuss the terms of peace. There seems no reason to believe that any trap was intended. The command to Devonshire was probably due to a desire to placate Grenville, who in the course of his vapourings about the conditions of peace, had threatened to call Newcastle, Hardwicke and Devonshire to the Cabinet meeting. Bute replied that the first two, being ineligible, could not, and the last-named would not come; and might not unnaturally have wished to demonstrate the truth of his remark.² Be this as it may, Devonshire begged to be excused, alleging that his long absence from the Councils would make his opinion of no importance.

The next letter which we find in the series is one from Fox, dated October 26.³

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I had not the honour of your Grace's till Saturday night,⁴ so had no opportunity of making your Grace's excuses to the King myself, but I took care they should be made. I am truly concern'd at the reason you have to make them.

"The Treasury says the Parliament cannot be put off,

¹ Devonshire to Newcastle, October 3, 1762 (Add. MSS. 32,943). The letter is in Egremont's own handwriting, and not in that of "a commis" in his office, as Walpole infers (*Memoirs*, i. 201).

² H. Fox to Cumberland, September 29.

³ Devonshire MSS.

⁴ October 22.

but a fortnight's delay is so much wish'd and may be so material, that I imagine means will be found to defer its meeting to the 25th. Yr Grace shall immediately know it if it is so, but as yet it remains fix'd for the 11th. Contrary to my expectation, I have been less abus'd this last fortnight than in any of the last six years. So little can anybody foresee what will please or displease the people. I wish to God I did not displease the D. of Cumberland. It is grievous to me, but it was my duty and unavoidable; and I am so far from changing mine, that when I think it is H.R.H. and yr Grace's wish in this critical time to see the D. of N. Minister, I am astonish'd at the opinion, as well as infinitely concern'd at its consequences to, my dear Lord, your most oblig'd, most obedient, and most affectte hble servt,

“ H. Fox.”

Soon afterwards Devonshire reached town, and on the 28th went to St James' to pay his respects to the King. Newcastle seems to have suspected a previous design on his part to resign his post.¹ Fox was impressed with the same belief.² If such was his real intention, the King was too quick for him, and refused to see him. Devonshire thereupon sent a message asking to whom he was to surrender his key as Lord Chamberlain. Receiving no satisfactory reply, he finally left it with Egremont; and soon after retired to the country, consumed with rage.

Was King George's action due to design, as a means of defeating a suspected plot to replace Newcastle at the head of the Administration? Or did a sudden fit of temper at a chance glimpse of Newcastle and Devonshire driving together earlier that morning obscure his better judgment? In any case, it would be difficult in the light of accumulated evidence not to throw the whole responsibility for this ill-timed step upon the monarch. At the time, however, Devonshire and his friends seem to have

¹ *Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 135; Newcastle to Granby, October 29, 1762 (Add. MSS. 32,944).

² H. Fox to Ilchester, October 28, 1762.

laid the mischief at Fox's door. "Ambition has blinded him and will be his ruin," his Grace wrote to Waldegrave.¹ Yet we cannot now doubt that he was ignorant of his royal master's intention. "I neither knew nor had the least suspicion of it," he wrote to Devonshire on November 9.² Indeed, he was horrified at the news. "There is a thing happen'd to-day, to talk of, and an unlucky one. The D. of Devonshire went to resign. The King would not see him, and sent him word that he should have his orders where to leave his staff. I fear H.M. has given him reason (which he never did before) to complain."³

Unfortunately, however, we cannot divest ourselves of the suspicion that Fox's annoyance at the affront which had been put upon Devonshire was rather due to political considerations than to a genuine regret for the wounded feelings of his late associate. The court was bent on disciplinary measures, and Fox himself was every day becoming more determined that those who would not consent to act with them must suffer the consequences. "So the signal is given," he wrote to Nicholl on the 30th, after Devonshire's relatives, Lord Bessborough and Lord George Cavendish, had surrendered their posts. The words seem evidence of some pre-arranged plan. At the moment, however, Fox was not anticipating any crisis. He had clearly never taken into consideration the fact that Devonshire, the most timid and the least outspoken of the offending magnates, might chance to become the first victim. He had hoped that some more determined partizan would be selected for the initial sacrifice. That Fortune should have chosen his own special friend for the experiment was the unkindest stroke of all. Probably he had hoped to rescue him from the impending holocaust. Certainly he would have tried his utmost to save him from such an outrageous insult, had the matter been discussed. But circumstances had made him powerless.

¹ November 7, 1762 (Holland House MSS.).

² Devonshire MSS.

³ H. Fox to Ilchester, October 28.

The blow had fallen before he even knew of the intention to strike.

Fox did not hurry to Devonshire House, as Walpole tells us.¹ He did not even write till November 2,² when his reference to Devonshire's dismissal was limited to a polite expression of sorrow for what had occurred and a wish that he could have been the victim instead of his Grace. He had requested an interview with the Duke of Cumberland on the 31st, but has left no account of it. The Duke told Newcastle two days later that the meeting was stormy, and that he had demonstrated very clearly that any conversations with Fox on business were over. It lasted more than an hour, for three-quarters of which Fox made no allusion to the subject which was uppermost in their minds. At length Fox explained the King's recent action by saying that His Majesty had feared a cabal from the sight of Devonshire and Newcastle driving together. Cumberland, in reply, took a strong line. "He said that the nobility might make a common cause of it, and think it may be their turn next." "That may be so," said Fox, "*some few* great lords may be offended"; and in other respects he thought "it might have an effect." He added that King George had said that he would never readmit Newcastle to the closet as long as he lived. This statement, however, Cumberland questioned, by reminding him of Halifax's negotiation a few short weeks before.³

Devonshire's answer to Fox's letter, written from Chatsworth on November 5, made no secret of his indignation. He had just received news of a further indignity—the removal of his name from the Privy Council list.⁴ "After

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 202.

² Devonshire MSS.

³ Add. MSS. 32,944.

⁴ For this again the King was entirely responsible. He (not Fox, as Mr Riker makes out) seems to have taken Lord Rockingham's resignation on November 3 and those which had preceded it, as a personal insult and as part of a Whig conspiracy against him (see *Life of Shelburne*, i. 136).

what has passed," he wrote as a postscript, "this, if true, cannot hurt me. But let me ask you one question. Are these things done without your approbation and participation? I hope so. If they are, how are you in the situation yt you represent yourself, and yt you was promised? I don't desire an answer."

Fox replied :

"Your Grace don't desire an answer, but I will tell you that I neither knew nor had the least suspicion of it. As soon as I was sure of it, for I was not present, I ask'd the other question you put to me, and ask'd it very seriously. I heartily wish I had had some occasion of asking it before. When I see yr Grace I will tell you all that was said. I think I discover a great deal more of one person's *own* in some other cases as well as this than I imagin'd, or than the world will believe." ¹

More resignations were received in due course. Lord Kinnoull and Lord Ashburnham vacated their respective posts. Newcastle's nephew, Lord Lincoln, followed, seemingly with no good grace. Charles Townshend was offered the Board of Trade, in October, with special power over the Colonies. He refused, apparently from unwillingness to work with Fox ²; for he supported the Government, and even termed the peace "a damned good one." ³ He threw up the Secretaryship-at-War in December, and was succeeded by Welbore Ellis. Had he waited a few days longer he would have realised the feebleness of the Opposition. As it was, he soon became dissatisfied. By the end of the year we find him again in treaty for the Board of Trade,⁴ and entering upon the duties in February. In the meanwhile, an offer of the Board was made to Bamber Gascoigne, one of Pitt's adherents. He also took

¹ H. Fox to Devonshire, November 9, 1762 (Devonshire MSS.). The allusion to the King in the last paragraph is unmistakable.

² *Chatham Corres.*, ii. 182.

³ Newcastle to Devonshire, November 20, 1762 (Add. MSS. 32,945).

⁴ H. Fox to Shelburne, December 28, 1762 (Lansdowne MSS.).

a long time to consider, but finally refused. Lord Strange was equally undetermined. At first, he seemed willing to accept the offers which Fox made him ; then increased his demands, and, when they were not granted, backed out altogether.

Lord Orford,¹ Horace Walpole's spendthrift nephew, took a different line. For some years he had openly professed a dislike to Fox ; though his uncle thought that he had not an idea of the reason for his enmity. Notwithstanding his coolness of manner, the Paymaster, through Horace, whom he wished to keep on the right side, offered him the Rangership of the Parks, a post vacated by Lord Ashburnham and worth over £2,000 a year. Orford came to London and accepted the place. He then retired again to the country, and never gave the Government a single vote !²

But if Fox's success with the grandees had its limitations, his mode of dealing with the rank and file of the House of Commons was more sure. From the first he had full confidence in his powers of persuasion, and looked upon victory as secure. " I do not doubt," he wrote to his brother on November 9, " but that the peace will not be long unpopular, nor in Parliament at all so." Once he had put his shoulder to the wheel there was to be no turning back. Of that he was determined ; and at last he had a free hand. He had been cited in a past decade as Sir Robert Walpole's ablest pupil. Here was the opportunity to prove his merits, though the occasion had been forced on him and all too late in life.

So once again the oft-quoted passage from Horace Walpole's writings must be transcribed. He is our sole authority for the wholesale bribery which is said to have taken place.

" Fox directly attacked the separate members of the House of Commons ; and with so little decorum on the

¹ George, third Earl of Orford (1730-91).

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 212.

part of either buyer or seller that a shop was publicly opened at the Pay Office, whither members flocked, and received the wages of their venality in bank bills, even to so low a sum as two hundred pounds for their votes on the treaty. Twenty-five thousand pounds, as Martin, Secretary of the Treasury, afterwards owned, were issued in one morning ; and in a single fortnight a vast majority was purchased to approve the peace ! ” ¹

Horace's pen is notoriously malevolent at this period where Fox is concerned. Yet, in the main, we cannot doubt the truth of his assertions ; though his inference that all those who voted in the majority on December 9 had taken bribes is ridiculous. It is true that Newcastle's influence had waned, and that Bute's was in the ascendant. The favourite had baited the ground thoroughly with increased appointments at court. The number of lords and grooms of the Bedchamber, of clerks of the green cloth, of officers of the household grew apace.² Organised corruption, and the success of the court at the polls in the previous year, paved the way for an easy triumph. Yet Fox made no secret of his trafficking. “ My success has fully answer'd my activity. And the D. of Newcastle will appear, as I thought he would, nothing without a court.” ³ Unlimited money was at his disposal, and he and his myrmidons made use of it to the full. “ Opposition will never divide 60,” he proudly exclaimed to Rigby on the 26th ⁴ ; and his assurance was not misplaced. .

¹ *Memoirs*, i. 199.

² *History of the late Minority*, p. 67.

³ H. Fox to J. L. Nicholl, November 27, 1762.

⁴ *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 161.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE session opened on November 25. Bute's reception in the streets was the reverse of flattering. At one moment he found himself the centre of a hostile mob, and was rescued with difficulty from its attentions. But inside the precincts of Parliament matters bore a more favourable aspect. The address in the House of Lords was not opposed ; and no one dared to challenge a division in the Lower House.¹ Neither Pitt nor Fox was present. The former was confined to his room with gout ; the latter was seeking re-election, on his Irish appointment.

On the 30th, the preliminaries of peace were laid before both Houses. December 9 was the day appointed for their consideration. An attempt to postpone the debate in the Commons on account of Pitt's illness was defeated by a large majority. Between those dates a meeting of the Whigs was held at Newcastle House, to discuss a plan of campaign. The prospects of successful opposition were not rosy. Cumberland's recent overtures to Pitt had met with little response. The late minister paraded his obligations to the Tories as a reason for refusing to join the Whigs, and shewed himself resolved to plough his lonely furrow. He took a firm stand against the peace as a whole. And as Newcastle could only consistently oppose certain of the conditions, their basis for co-operation was limited.

¹ " I enclose both the drafts, and earnestly entreat Mr Fox either to choose the one he likes best, or to mix them, by cutting, carving, etc., as he shall think fit. I have had the task of such mutilation before, but never drew an entire speech " (Bute to Shelburne, November 3, 1762 ; Lansdowne MSS.).

Signs of disunion were not wanting at the meeting. No one agreed as to the policy to be pursued. Newcastle's proposals were ill received by the majority, and the whole atmosphere was one of gloom and despondency. This impression was reflected in the discussions in Parliament. The fact that the preliminaries had already been ratified by the King of England, as well as by the sovereigns of France and Spain, was a further handicap to those who sought to defeat them.¹ The address to the King was identical in both Houses. Fox was largely responsible for the wording,² which was calculated to wound the susceptibilities of as few members as possible. No division was taken in the Lords, where Shelburne opened the debate. Newcastle and Hardwicke opposed; Mansfield approved. The chief feature of the day was a good speech from Bute.

In the Commons, Fox took upon himself to move the address. The proceedings opened quietly, but were enlivened by the theatrical apparition of Pitt, borne to the bar by his servants from a bed of sickness, swathed in flannel and black cloth wrappings. Notwithstanding his prostration, his speech lasted for more than three hours. He fiercely arraigned the peace and the treatment which had been meted out to King Frederick. Yet he spoke of himself as holding aloof from all parties. His turgid sentences, his faint utterances and his prolixity in detail, wearied the house, and made but little impression on his auditors. "It was not a day," says Walpole, "on which his genius thundered." Fox rose immediately to reply, but Pitt did not wait to hear him. The leader of the House said little; for success was already assured. Indeed, he rather laid himself out to explain his appearance in the ranks of his former foes, than to expatiate on the advantages of the treaty. He spoke of a general union

¹ *Life of Hardwicke*, iii. 434.

² Bute to H. Fox, November 30; December 2, 1762. Bute suggested various minor alterations. Most of them were embodied in the text.

of factions under the King ; but denied that it was in the mind of any man to enlarge the prerogative of the Crown.¹ The division shewed 319 in favour of the address against 65 : and a further trial of strength on the Report stage next day reduced the minority to 63. Newcastle had withdrawn his followers on the first day, but omitted to warn Cumberland's adherents, who remained and voted, much to their patron's annoyance. Lord Royston, Hardwicke's eldest son, voted with the majority on the 9th² ; and although Charles Yorke, the Attorney-General, mumbled a few formal sentences against the conditions of peace on the 10th, he took no part in either division. Newcastle consoled himself with the belief that many votes were lost by the treacherous conduct of the brothers.³

"Now my son is King of England," was the pæan sounded by the Princess of Wales on hearing the news. The court were elated beyond measure, and took immediate steps to follow up their success. Fox had written to Nicholl on November 27 that his advice was, "to pursue the victory without delay ; and without even, what I am on most occasions inclined to, lenity."

Three days later he wrote to Shelburne : "Take away the D. of Newcastle's three Lieutcyts before Granby comes. The enemy is at a stand. Why do we stand too ? Spirit and despatch should go together, indeed will. A dilatory pursuit will soon be no pursuit." ⁴ About the same time he explained his views fully to Bute.

"If H.M. lets those who have come to the brink of resigning, such as Mr Pelham, Roberts, &c., &c., &c., &c., retreat with impunity, he may expect, when a conjuncture may come that is more favourable than the present, to have these attempts made again. But if H.M. pursues his victory and do's not suffer one dependent, whether

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 232.

² *Ibid.*, i. 233.

³ Newcastle to Hardwicke, December 19, 1762 (Add. MSS. 32,945).

⁴ H. Fox to Shelburne, November 30, 1762 (Lansdowne MSS.).

in or out of Parlt, of these great men to remain in place, he will make resigning so serious a consideration, that he will be troubl'd with no more. H.M. has it in his power to make his reign easy ; I hope he will not let slip the opportunity.

“ I humbly advise that the Lcy of Nottinghamshire be given to the D. of Kingston. That of Sussex to the Duke of Richmond. And that of Middlesex to the D. of Portland, or other properer persons. But I wish them all given away immediately. I would then search for and pick out ev'ry one for whom he [Newcastle], Lord Rockingham or Lord Ashburnham, &c., have procur'd places, who are numerous and all enemys. Lord Rockingham's and Lord Holdernesse's Lcys should be immediately taken from them.

“ The Attorney-Genl and Lord Royston not coming to hear the K.'s speech read either at my house or at the Cockpit, should, if they acted like gentlemen, be accompany'd with the Att.'s resignation. I am sure the man Lord Royston so lately and shamelessly recommended to Lord Bute ought to be turn'd out instantly ; and to turn out the Att. would, I believe, shew courage, and be of great service. I would make examples of those out of Parliament immediately ; of the rest just before the holy days.

“ For ever afterwards the King will know what to depend upon. But taking away the Lieutenancys and thereby declaring the D. of Newcastle, Ld Rockingham and Lord Holdernesse desperate with the King, should be done to-morrow.” ¹

And on December 10, after the victory was won, Fox addressed him in the same strain :

“ I should not wish your Lordship so entirely well as I do (and hope you think I do), if I did not touch upon the subject of turning out, lest these scenes should ever come to be acted over again. The impertinence of our conquered enemies last night was great, but will not

¹ This draft is docketed 1763. It clearly belongs to the last days of November 1762.

continue so if His Majesty shows no lenity. But, my Lord, with regard to their numerous dependents in Crown employments, it behoves your Lordship in particular to leave none of them. Their connections spread very wide, and every one of them, their relations and friends, is in his heart your enemy. They all think themselves secure, and many talk with their own mouths, all by those of their relations and acquaintances, against your Lordship. Turn the tables, and you will immediately have thousands who will think the safety of themselves or their friends depends upon your Lordship, and will therefore be sincere and active friends. I have very little to do with this personally, but [am] willing to take upon myself all the odium of this advice, as I am sure it is the only way to make the rest of His Majesty's reign or of your Administration easy. And I don't care how much I am hated, if I can say to myself, *I did His Majesty such honest and essential service.*"¹

Clearly Fox's mind was made up to the necessity for the sternest measures. But he was not alone in his opinion. "Party," wrote Bute, "will be well explored, and everything the King detests gathered into one ostensible heap, and formed either to be destroyed by him or by getting the better to lead him in chains."² Even Shelburne was inexorable. "Before another question comes, let the 213 taste some of the plunder of the 74. Without you do something of that kind, you'll find your cause want a necessary animation and your friends want encouragement."³ Yet Shelburne's determination to proceed to extremes fell short of the infatuation of his two colleagues.

The political proscriptions which took place during that winter may be divided into two classes. In the one, were the refractory office-bearers, who acted in public and in

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 137, 138.

² Bute to Shelburne, November 19, 1762 (*ibid.*).

³ Shelburne to Bute, December 1762. The figures are those of the division on December 1, when Mr Calvert attempted to postpone the debate on the preliminaries.

private against the Government. In the other, were the holders of non-political posts, the underlings and an unhappy band of dependents who were innocent of all offence. The necessity for ministerial discipline rendered such dismissals as came under the first head perfectly legitimate and even desirable ; though the principle which dictated it was at that time new to public life. No minister in the first half of the eighteenth century hesitated to give his vote against his colleagues, if he felt so inclined. Nor did any thought of resignation consequent on his action ever cross his mind. The system, in the result, proved subversive of the whole theory of government. It became as reprehensible in practice as are the methods of blind obedience to the dictates of party. Some change was also, perhaps, inevitable among the permanent occupants of the lower posts. The Whig party had held undivided sway for an indefinite period, and had filled these places with its own special adherents. In the ordinary course of events, the process of elimination would have taken years ; and the Tories could properly lay claim to some immediate share of these emoluments.

So far, Shelburne was in complete agreement with Bute and Fox. But he differed from them, when they began to lay rough hands on offices and appointments which by no stretch of imagination could be termed political. The first instance was the case of the Lord-Lieutenants. There was no precedent for their dismissal. Yet Grafton, Newcastle and Rockingham all suffered this indignity. Devonshire was only saved from a like fate by Fox's intercession ; but resigned of his own accord. Next, no treatment was too outrageous for the rank and file. Few of the minor officials escaped. No one in any way beholden to a member of Parliament who had voted adversely to the Government was safe. Further, clerks and messengers, whose sole offence lay in the fact that they had worked under, or had been recommended by, a Whig, were deprived of their means of living. By a stroke of

the pen old servants and humble connections of the great were reduced to destitution. Excisemen in Sussex were turned out neck and crop, solely on account of Newcastle's influence in the county; for his Grace's dependents were specially singled out for ill-treatment. December 20 was "execution day."¹ High and low suffered alike. Even patents granted by the late King were in danger of annulment, had not the Law Officers protested against the enormity of such a proceeding. Bute and Fox seemed to have suddenly gone mad. The greatness of their victory had turned their heads. The favourite's design, however, can easily be fathomed. He desired to annihilate the Whigs, to destroy them root and branch. Theoretically, a new party—"the King's friends"—would rise in their place, and would control the affairs of state under the royal guidance. Then would the realisation of his Utopian dreams be secure for all time.

Unfortunately for Bute's schemes, he was utterly lacking in the gift of discernment. It amused him to halloo on his lieutenant to fresh quarry; though it is only fair to relate that he required no incitement. New victims must be found; intimidation was not effectual unless effective. But Bute failed to know when to cry enough. His acrimony and intolerance drove Pitt into the arms of his foes; and raised the nucleus of a formidable opposition against the court. He had unwittingly put back the clock. Years passed before the King reaped that harvest which he thought already ripe for the sickle.

And what of Fox's conduct? Cumberland was aghast at the change which had so suddenly come over his late follower. "Fox has deceived me grossly," he said to Waldegrave—"not as you think by giving me up; he might be as angry with me for talking to Newcastle and Pitt—but he has deceived me, for I thought him good-natured. But in all these transactions he has shewn the bitterest revenge and unhumanity."²

¹ Walpole's *Letters*, v. 283.

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 241.

What clue have we to the reason for this access of violence? Indeed, Fox seemed like one possessed. The advent of power had effected a complete transformation in his usual placid nature. Some partial excuse might have been found for him in his dealings with Newcastle, had he restricted his proscriptions to the veteran's immediate adherents. His relations with him throughout a long career had been embittered by a policy of pinpricks and at times by open hostility. At last Fox had forced him to his knees. The moment had arrived to pay off old scores; to make sure that his Grace's day was over for ever. But his onslaught on the weak, the innocent and the defenceless cannot be palliated. His position was anomalous, it is true. He stood alone, a solitary figure, among his life-long enemies; and in order to fight their battle he was turning to rend his own party. And why? He looked upon it as his duty to stand by his sovereign in his hour of need. He regarded the peace as a necessity to the nation. We have seen enough too of his disposition to realise that once his mind was made up he would pursue his object to the bitter end, without heed to public censure or abuse. Difficulties beget harsh deeds. Yet it would be hard to find an adequate excuse for the savagery which he displayed in his hour of triumph.

Revenge perhaps was uppermost in Fox's mind. He had hoped to carry the majority of his associates with him into the ranks of the court. He felt deeply the failure of his personal influence, which had been as unexpected as it was disappointing. He worked himself up to believe that he was the aggrieved party; and his annoyance took the shape of bravado. He would shew the whole world that power had come to him at last. Since those to whom he had looked for assistance had failed him, they and all their belongings should feel the weight of his wrath. And so, for the third time in his official career, a wave of ruthlessness overcame his innate good-humour. All that was worst in his composition ran riot. No instigation

was necessary. Public clamour fell on unheeding ears. He carried out his leader's instructions to the letter, nor did the persecutions cease till the last shreds of his already impaired reputation had been finally thrown to the winds.

When Parliament reassembled after Christmas, opposition seemed dead. Yet the court and its representatives had unpleasant moments to face throughout the remainder of the session. Notwithstanding the evident lack of enthusiasm for the peace among the public, no one dared to raise their voice against the Definitive Treaty, which had been signed in Paris on February 10, when presented to Parliament on March 18. Wilkes allowed "it was the damn'dest peace for the Opposition that ever was made."¹ But before that date, scenes had occurred in the House of Commons which demonstrated that Fox was losing his grip on the assembly. Invective and abuse out of doors had heartened his old enemies within, the Tories and the Scots, to combine in harassing and ridiculing him. He had been warned at the end of the year that members would "drop off and desert for want of pay."² And so it was. There were more mouths than could possibly be fed.

As yet Bute could count on an all-sufficient margin. Although their majorities dwindled, ministers were still able to carry all before them. They divided 103 to 36 upon the question of the adjournment of the House on January 30, "King Charles's Day." The resolution to dispense with the customary holiday was moved by Lord Strange. Fox, who had brought forward a similar motion in 1755, voted in the majority against it on the present occasion. The Navy Estimates passed with little comment. On those of the army, the Government had the support of Pitt. He announced that he looked upon the peace as an armed truce of ten years; and on that account desired to maintain the establishments at the highest

¹ *Bedford Corres.*, iii, 202.

² Sir G. Oxenden to H. Fox, December 30, 1762.

possible figure. He went on to advocate that the services of half-pay officers in employment should be recognised before those of officers holding more recent commissions ; and although ministers disagreed with him, they allowed him to carry his point.¹

Three days later, Grenville took upon himself to advert on his kinsman's ideas of economy, and received a severe drubbing for his pains. The appellation of "the gentle shepherd," which Pitt applied to him on this occasion, in the words of a popular song, stuck to him for the rest of his life. The chastisement was administered during a debate upon the budget. Of all incompetent finance ministers, Sir Francis Dashwood proved himself the most incompetent. Certainly he had no false pride, for he afterwards said of himself, "People will point at me, and cry, 'There goes the worst Chancellor of the Exchequer that ever appeared.'"² Great objection was taken to two of his proposals for increasing the revenues of the country—a Government loan, and a tax on cider. An issue of £3,500,000 stock, bearing 4 per cent. interest, was launched on such extravagant terms that it soon rose to a premium of 11 per cent. Subscriptions were confined to prominent Government supporters, and the lists were not opened to the public. Nine of these fortunate financiers were said to have cleared £20,000 apiece. Fox's share was estimated at £10,000, Calcraft's at £7,000, and those of others in like proportion.³

Upon the cider tax a flame was kindled which spread rapidly. The West of England was soon ablaze. That hated word *Excise*, which had all but wrecked the great Walpole, became an indirect factor in the fall of his less illustrious successor. Notwithstanding the uproar, the bill was forced through both Houses. Fox took no part in

¹ Lord Temple was not in accord with Pitt on this subject, and his opinions are reflected in the 42nd number of the *North Briton*, Wilkes's publication.

Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 250.

North Briton, No. 42

the debates. He remembered how the cry had been taken up in years gone by ; and he knew from his brother in the cider country that trouble was again brewing. The mere thought of a tax collected by means of domiciliary visits was sufficient to alienate the Tory squires. Besides, the impost was not worth the risk. It was an after-thought, invented to take the place of a tax on linen—a project which Dashwood had not sufficiently mastered to be able to explain to the House¹; £70,000 was the maximum revenue which the Treasury expected to draw from it.

Fox wrote a few weeks later :

“ The debate in the H. of Lords will be a bitter one. The tax has been ill consider'd, and is too severe compar'd with the little use it will be of. I hate to think that this should be our last act of power, and which you singly in the H. of Lords must justify, and from your station take singly upon yourself. I would listen to the first sensible speech against it, perhaps Ld Suffolk's, and then say that the unforeseen dislike and unforeseen objections to this tax were such, that if the Parlt would consent to set a month later, you would put it off, and hope the Commons would open their Committee of Ways and Means to consider of another. Then you would make your last act gracious, instead of infinitely offensive and tending to alienate the Tories of 6 counties, and an act of grace and favour. And to impute it to fear and pusillanimity, your determin'd resignation (which I must for ever lament) will make impossible. If you favor this, you may open the debate with it, without staying for a speech ; which may perhaps be the best way. Or if you want to prepare your friends for this event, you may put it off for a week ; but I should prefer the 2nd method.”²

The cider tax and his consequent passage of arms with Grenville seem to have decided Pitt to seek new alliances. The very next day—March 8—a great dinner was held at Devonshire House. Pitt and Temple met Newcastle,

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 141.

² H. Fox to Bute, March 27, 1763.

Grafton, Portland, Rockingham, Hardwicke and other leading Whigs. The peace was already signed, so further resistance could only prove ineffective. A fertile field for difference was thereby removed; and the Government had again to cope with an active Opposition.

From this moment Bute determined that he could no longer stand his ground. He had incurred Bedford's enmity: and was face to face with changes in the House of Commons, which were bound to weaken his position. When Fox originally took office, he seems to have stipulated for a peerage, as remuneration for his services. The bargain is indirectly mentioned in a letter to his wife.¹ We can find no confirmation of Shelburne's statement that Fox was determined to retire at the end of 1762,² yet the latter was beginning to clamour in January for the fulfilment of Bute's promises.

"Though your Lordship's goodness and strict honour make it unnecessary, yet that I may not be liable to the least mental reproach, let me tell you, and through you His Majesty, as with the strictest truth I can, that what I feel from sitting in a full House of Commons till nine o'clock at night—though with a vacant mind, were of itself enough to convince me of the impossibility of my continuing there."³

Fox's insistence was not lessened by what he believed to be an insidious attack from the Tory camp during the month of February. Sir John Phillips came forward to propose an Enquiry into the Accounts of the Nation. The motion received no encouragement from the late ministers, and fell flat. Bute favoured it to some extent, from a mistaken idea of gaining popularity; but at the

¹ "I can with truth assure you that I have not the least inclination, intention or view of staying in the House of Commons longer than this sessions only" (H. Fox to Lady Holland, December 3, 1762). Compare *Life of Hardwicke*, iii. 388: Devonshire to Newcastle, April 9, 1763 (Add. MSS. 32,948): Holland to Sandwich, June 24, 1765.

² *Life of Shelburne*, i. 139.

³ H. Fox to Bute, January 1763 (*ibid.*, i. 141).

instance of Dashwood the matter was referred to a Select Committee, and was thereby practically shelved. Fox certainly displayed a marked uneasiness about the Pay Office accounts, and by his objections affixed a spurious importance to the investigation. He appeared to suspect the intentions of the Treasury, and believed that they were not as innocent as they appeared to be.¹ His ill-concealed alarm gave his enemies the opportunity of mortifying him in the course of the debate, and in the appointment of the Committee.

As was to be expected under such circumstances, the whole affair ended in smoke. And so lightly did the Committee treat its task, that one of the members suggested that the report should read as follows: "Resolved that this Committee has spent its time as foolishly as the nation has done its money!"²

But these were not the only humiliations which Fox had to suffer. It was openly suggested that he had forged a paltry petition for relief from certain inhabitants of Newfoundland, because all the names were written in the same hand. In reality, a fair copy had been made from the original by a clerk, and new signatures had not been obtained. Fox was nevertheless obliged to withdraw the document. "Did you ever see a man so treated in my situation?" said he to Onslow, after a scene upon another occasion. "By G—, I will have an explanation and ample submission, or I will never set my foot in this House again."

Contrary to Walpole's malevolent insinuations³ that Fox had been left entirely out of the secret, Bute lost no time in communicating to him his determination to retire. Indeed, he had already begun to prepare him for the eventuality a week before.

¹ H. Fox to J. L. Nicholl, February 19, 1763.

² *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 208, 220; Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 243, 248; *Life of Shelburne*, i. 140.

³ *Memoirs*, i. 256.

“Glover is not the only man I have reason to complain of, this 2nd of March; C. Townshend has given me a most unusual proof of the ungenerous turn of the present age. Indeed, my dear Sir, the end of my labors was solemnly determin’d, even before I undertook them. Had it been otherwise, had I been form’d to taste ambition, power and pre-eminence, I have had so many wholesome antidotes to such pursuits, that no wealth, no honor the King could bestow (tho’ able to do it with as profuse a hand as any of our former Kings), should tempt me to risque my honor, to destroy my health, my peace and every pleasing sensation of my mind, as I now do each day I live. I know the world will attribute this to affluent circumstances, but the few that know me would expect from me the same determination, tho’ I exchang’d my present envy’d station for a cottage. When you, Sir, with a spirit and generosity that I can never forget, gave us your help, to save this poor country in its extremest peril, honor, gratitude, duty and affection made my stay necessary; but now, thanks to kind Providence, the vessel’s safe in harbour. Firmness and resolution are no more necessary, but a thousand little arts, sinister arts and unworthy trafficking, become the proper talents for the fresh water pilot. These my nature abhors. Besides I am certain, retire when I will, I shall have the comfort of removing no inconsiderable store of unpopularity that His Majesty’s partiality to me has brought upon his Government.”¹

Fox did his best to turn the First Lord from his purpose. He gave him his reasons at great length in a paper, “wrote for Lord Bute,” on March 11.

“Too sure of the sincerity of your intentions to retire, yet I cannot see how it is possible that you should leave the Ministry this year. But you bid me suppose that you was dead. I choose to write this paper on a supposition that you will stay. If you were to die, the King would do well to execute this plan or something like it, putting into your place some person apparently a stop-gap, until he had that experience of some men which to

¹ Bute to H. Fox, March 2, 1763.

gain is the foundation of this paper. For it seems to me that it were eligible to put most, if not all, of the great and efficient offices which give daily access to the King into other hands. Whilst you stay to control them it is another thing ; but your going will open to them views which they are, some of them, weak enough to be looking for already, and whilst they are struggling for power such intrigues, cabals and bad arts would subsist as it would be miserable to H.M. to live amongst, and as must be very prejudicial to his affairs. I would find honest and proper men for these places, nor is it surely impossible to find them. Yet I would not be so sure I had found them as to pronounce them such, till H.M. should be able by experience to know them. The persons I would put into great places now, and give access to H.M., that he might observe and know them, are Lord Gower, Lord Shelburne and, I think, Lord Waldegrave. Your Lordship will add to these such as occur to you. These are men of honour and veracity. The first is of a humour and nature the most practicable, and if any man could do the office of Southern Secry, without either quarrelling with Chs Townshend, or letting down the dignity of his own office, he would. His being in such a station is the thing (and perhaps the only thing) that would fix that capricious being, the D. of Bedford, whose present intention is to resign and take no other employment. If that should be the case, he would dine a fifth Duke at Devonshire House within this twelvemonth.

“ The second, Lord Shelburne, has uncommon abilities, great activity, and loves you sincerely. I need say no more to you of him than that he cannot with decency or utility remain as he now is. If he has an employment it must be a very high one, and he will fill it well.

“ The third is a man of strict honour, will go through with what he engages in without any indirection, has great firmness with great gentleness of manner, is by his friends both respected and beloved, has few enemies and no view to popularity.

“ Those who are, and should not remain where they are at court are Ld Halifax, Lord Egremont, G. Grenville.

“ The first is vain and presumptuous, aiming at the highest degree of power, and secure, in his own mind,

of universal applause ; taking no connections seriously or that may bind him whenever they become in the least inconvenient to his views, and parting with no connections which he thinks may one day serve him, however they may be offensive or injurious to those he acts with. Such is his present intimacy with Legge, and his leaning to the D. of Newcastle, &c., &c., &c. Insincere, regardless of his word to a supreme degree, and regardful only of what may serve his vanity and ambition, which are without bounds.

“ Of Lord Egremont, you, who was witness of his conduct in the summer, do not want to be inform’d. He was then undoubtedly led by Lord Mansfield, thro’ G. Grenville, to very bad purposes, and talk’d publicly of the necessity of widening your bottom by reconciliation with the D. of Newcastle. Since I came, he has been rather a useless, lumpish, sour friend, than an enemy. But he certainly has not that cordiality that I wish wherever friendship is profess’d and ought to be sincere ; as, o’ my conscience, his ought to be towards you.

“ G. Grenville is and will be, whether in the Ministry or in the H. of Commons, a hindrance not a help, and sometimes a very great inconvenience to those he is joined with. He is a man of a very weak understanding, and I wish I could impute to that alone what is wrong in him. His refusing to go on with the King’s measures towards peace, your Lordship will call timidity. But when Lord Mansfield could inspire him with the thought of calling Ld Hardwicke and the D. of Newcastle to the King’s assistance, was there no permanency of employment, do you believe, hung out to him by Lord Mansfield, which his fears made him think would not be the case if he went on with you ? Weak and fearful as he is, had he been honest, he would not have brought you into the dilemma you was in in October last. When, in a great office, he withholds from the King and you all the use of it to Government, you will say it is a Catonical temper and mulish resolution not to depart from what he once lays down. Let no such mule be in such an office. But, my Lord, a man who can be a mule with his friend and benefactor has neither good nature, good sense nor honesty ; and indeed I think him deficient in all. In

the H. of Commons he will ever be a tiresome incumbrance, unless the chief persons there have authority enough to set him, like other incumbrances, aside out of the way.

“ I now come to the H. of Commons, and as there never was one so well dispos’d to be govern’d, it is the greatest pity there should be danger, as there is, of its becoming ungovernable. Sir Frs Dashwood is an honest man, has the best intentions, and may be recover’d from any of those starts which he is subject to. But he is not fit for the station he is in, and it is too late in life for him to make himself so. I have consider’d it well, and do with the greatest confidence advise that Mr Oswald be made Chancellor of the Exchequer. His abilities are so great and so well known to be so, that nobody will think he was made because he was a Scotchman. Many undoubtedly will say so, but when people say what everybody knows they don’t themselves believe, they will be little regarded. And it is time to lay aside all thoughts of that objection on every occasion. All has been said that can be said, and if you think no more of it I believe you will hear no more of it. Whether Sir J. Turner will be governable I don’t know. He is shallow and conceited, and I should fear would not. Lord North is young and interested, and his views of rising in the H. of Commons will, I fancy, make him I won’t say only tractable, but obsequious. There must never be a difference among the Treasury about anything. I would have all business, the whole system of the next sessions, settled between you and Oswald before the Parliament meets, and not a tittle of it departed from afterwards. I do not propose Oswald to have a levee, and manage, as it is called, the members of the House. That never was, nor never can be done but by the minister who is in your station. But Oswald will on all occasions take the lead, and will be supposed to speak your sense. If this scheme is punctually followed, the House of Commons will, in another sessions, gain great credit by the ability with which the business will be planned and the steadiness with which it will be pursued; and both together will beget an opinion of discipline so established as may make things go on well, even if you should retire and put a less able man into your place. Who that man should be, H.M. must judge.

He is so amiable, and condescends to make himself so agreeable to those who have the honour to approach him, that it is very fit he should consider the agreeableness as well as ability of a man he is to see ev'ry day. I have endeavoured therefore to draw honest men to be under his immediate observation out of whom to choose.

" Lord Chancellor must be brought to take judges with a view to parliamentary interest where they are equally fit. If he will not lead, he must be drove.

" But, my Lord, in what way is Lord Hardwicke and his family to be considered? Are the sons to wait, with £20,000 a year from the King, for an opportunity to oppose his measures, and not taking the most trifling steps in support of them—nay, saying, as they do publickly, that their father's friendship with the D. of Newcastle is sacred, and that they shall abide by it? I would bring them to explanation by removing at least Sir Jo. Yorke from his Embassy, and his younger brother from the Board of Trade when you want a vacancy. But this is in some measure out of the intention with which this paper is written.

" I have said nothing to Chs Townshend. He must be left to that worst enemy, himself; care only being taken that no agreeableness, no wit, no zealous and clever behaviour, tho' on the right side, ever betray you into trusting him for half an hour.

" This paper may be a very silly one, because I may not know things that known would quite alter my opinion. But as things appear to me, it is just. It is certainly my sincere opinion, and given with as much disinterested affection to H.M. and cordiality of friendship to your Lordship as can be in the heart of any man.

" I shall ever have great satisfaction in thinking that I obeyed H.M.'s commands, and have not been quite useless, nor, as I trust, at all disagreeable to H.M., in the execution of them. It will be an addition to that pleasure, if I can hear that his affairs go on easily after I have left them, and think that to their doing so this paper may have at all contributed."

Bute's reply took the form of an offer to hand over the Treasury to Fox.

“At the end of the sessions, 1763, Lord Bute, from the King, and with much entreaty from himself, desir’d me to take the Treasury and Exchequer and continue in the H. of Commons. I saw no difficulty or danger, and would certainly have done it. But my health did not permit, and I was obliged to claim and insist on the King’s promise, that I should leave the H. of C. at the end of that sessions.”¹

He employed Calcraft as his intermediary. The latter lost no time in acquainting Shelburne with what occurred at their meeting. “I write lest I should forget any material part of a very long conference. I am just come from the Pay Office. Mr Fox is plainly, in his own mind, much inclined to the Treasury, but Lady Holland is so much against it and so miserable at the thoughts of it, that I could not but keep my faith with her, and desist from persuading Mr Fox to what she says would make her miserable and kill him.”

Fox refused; and Calcraft did not disguise his regret. “That would have done. The next best thing would be to give Lord Waldegrave the Treasury. This, I doubt, Lord Bute won’t do.”

As this decision portended the termination of Fox’s political career, it seems more than a coincidence that Calcraft should have made no secret of his preparations for transferring his allegiance from the patron to whom he owed so much. He wrote at the same time that his future line of conduct would depend on whether Shelburne was made Secretary of State. Had the latter been out of the question, he would, he said, have carried all his forces to Pitt’s standard.²

Two days later Fox wrote a further letter to Lord Bute. Notwithstanding his dislike to George Grenville, he stated quite frankly that he considered him to be Bute’s most suitable successor, if the latter was still bent on retiring

¹ Holland to Sandwich, June 24, 1765.

² March 15, 1763 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 146).

and would not even consider a postponement of his resignation.¹

“ Finding with great concern that Lord Bute’s quitting, and quitting now, is a thing determined, and (for which Lady Caroline and I return our sincerest thanks) that the promise to us is remembered, and I am not desired to stay, I, at your Lordship’s desire, write down my thoughts of what should be done, considering these circumstances and accommodating them as well as I can to what I heard from you this morning.

“ The first thing to be considered, on which all the rest must turn, is who shall be at the head of the Treasury? Lord Halifax, Lord Waldegrave, Lord Northumberland or G. Grenville seem the only persons out of whom you can choose.

“ If either of the three first, Oswald must be Chancellor of the Exchequer. If G. Grenville, he will be First Lord and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of all these I incline to Grenville, if I can fairly say incline to one to whom I have so many objections. He has lost the esteem of the House of Commons, where on this supposition he ought to be in the highest. He is in disgrace there, from being supposed to have been tried and found insufficient, and from the ill repute his speaking there is in. I waive other objections because not allowed by those who know him better than I do, yet they speak of great timidity, a sad quality in the minister of the House of Commons. But upon the whole, and especially knowing Lord Bute’s good opinion of him, I very reluctantly (I can hardly bring myself to it) give the preference to Mr Grenville.

“ Upon this supposition, let the popular Earl of Halifax remain where he is. Let Lord Shelburne succeed Lord Egremont. If, as I hope, that should drive Charles Townshend from the Board of Trade, let Oswald succeed him, and between Lord Shelburne and Oswald that greatest and most necessary of all schemes, the settlement of America, may be effected. Let Lord Gower, the most practicable of men, be put at the head of the Admiralty. Suppose Lord Tavistock were made Ambassador to Paris. These two things would fix the Duke of Bedford, who

¹ March 17, 1763 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 148).

might then quit if he pleased. And let Lord Egremont be President. Lord Talbot talks of nothing but how well he is with the King, and I cannot believe thinks of quitting. If he does, Lord Egremont will make the best Lord Steward that ever was, be a great economist for the King, and yet keep up great dignity. I should give the Lieutenancy of Ireland to Lord Waldegrave. And I wish it may be considered of what great use Lord Northumberland may be to administration in Middlesex and Westminster. If there is room I would give him the Privy Seal, and put Lord Hertford in his place, if it is thought worth while to give him anything. I have not said enough of Lord Waldegrave. He will do the King's business in Ireland better than anybody whatever, *suaviter et fortiter*, and though he will never join Devonshire House, yet the employing him will disarm and cast a damp upon them more than anything. Lord Egremont, if he were to go to Ireland, would, I believe, manage and behave worse than anybody. He has not one quality for that employment.

“When I know how these great things are settled, it will be time enough (if ever requisite) to give my sentiments on less matters that depend on these. Of what relates to me and mine, as far as promised or even hinted to me, I have no doubt. Unmentioned things, that I will call *agréments* or graces, on my departure I will hope for, as they will not be unreasonable. But, at all events, let me trust that I shall retain the good opinion of the King, whose benignity charms me, and the sincere friendship (for I will not be content with less) of that man of strictest honour, my Lord Bute.”

So far Fox was perfectly satisfied with his position. He looked forward to a dignified withdrawal from his more arduous duties to the repose of the House of Lords. He still intended to remain in enjoyment of the emoluments of the Pay Office, and hoped with the termination of war to find time for an extended trip to Sp̃a for the benefit of his own and Lady Holland's health. One matter alone troubled him, and this doubt perhaps explains the fancy which Calcraft announced that he had

shewn for the Treasury. Difficulties might arise in the adjustment of war accounts, in relation to the payment of warrants drawn on his deputy-paymasters abroad. These had been made by order of the Treasury, and, as long as Bute was at the head of affairs, Fox knew that he had nothing to fear. But if an enemy succeeded to the post, he might refuse his authority to these transactions. In that case, under certain circumstances, the Paymaster's situation might become very involved.

On the 19th, Fox had a long confabulation with his friend, Mr Nicholl, one of the leading officials in his office. The latter at first made light of the Paymaster's fears. But mature consideration induced him to alter his mind. He wrote to Fox next day :

“ The conversation I had the honour to have with you yesterday set me a thinking ; and my thoughts have raised in me very strong doubts of the prudence and justness of the opinion I gave on the matter you mention'd to me. I am now sensible my conclusion was made too hastily ; and if it was not unreasonable, it was certainly unwise, and ought not to be followed. To imagine as I did, because your office is ministerial and subordinate to the orders of the Treasury, and that, therefore, as with reason, justice and equity they cannot refuse to confirm their own orders and authenticate all the warrants that have been drawn on your deputies, and save you in all adventures harmless who have obey'd them—to conclude from these premises they certainly *will do it*, will not hold.

“ Mr G.¹ may decline it from whim, humour or ill will ; from a paltry policy of raising his own credit and conduct by disclaiming the having of anything to do with the acts of his predecessors ; from ill-judging, may really think them in some instances irregular, and that he ought not to do it. Or the same fear that prevented his setting his hand to the peace, may prevent his appearing to confirm this great and distracted expense. One or all of those or other reasons may keep him from doing it. And if they should ? What remedy have you ? I confess

¹ Grenville.

I don't know. And when he has begun this dance, may not his successors think proper to continue it?

"I so sincerely and heartily wish you free from the plagues and troubles of business; and out of the noise and nonsense of public affairs; and in the enjoyment of that most desirable situation of *otium cum dignitate*; that it is uneasy to me (how much more must it be to you?) to follow any thought that crosses this idea. But it is of so great moment to you and your family to consider and fix this point, which if not well secured will leave you and them ill at ease, that I should never be at ease as long as I live, if by having treated it too lightly, I should have contributed to make you do so too. Suffer me therefore to put two suppositions before you for your consideration:

"First. Whether Ld B. may not be prevailed on to give a general Privy Seal, in such large and comprehensive words as to authenticate all payments whatever made by your deputies in the course of the war in Germany, N. America or elsewhere, in consequence of warrants from Commander-in-Chief, commissaries or others; without annexing any account of particulars.

"I own I know not of any such having been granted. But is that a sufficient reason why it should not? To me it does not appear so.

"If this cannot be obtain'd, then suppose you should take the Treasury (if Ld B. is determined to leave it) with the sole view of doing this for yourself and leaving it (ye Treasury) certainly the end of the year before Parliament met. A disagreeable thought. What then will become of Kingsgate, Spa, &c.? Lady Holland will detest me and my nasty suppositions. I will pursue them no further."

Fox replied on the 22nd:

"Your kind letter set me on thinking too, and thinking after reading your letter over several times has made me easier, tho' neither of your propositions will do. I cannot ask Ld B. for such a Privy Seal; and so extraordinary a one asked and not granted, or even if granted, would raise, I think, instead of laying, noise and difficulties.

"The next were impossible, for Ld B. sees no good to the K. if he were to stay till Xmas. And there would be no good nor use in me staying. I am sure I shall not therefore be wished to stay, unless for good and all.

"Why then am I easier? First and above all, because it seems that we want to account by Privy Seal for nothing but what we prove the payment of, and my mind tells me that if I plainly prove the payment by order, that will sooner or later bear me harmless. If the Treasury have exceeded their power by giving commissarys power to give warrants, not authoriz'd so to do under the Great Seal, I don't suppose I was to insist on seeing their patents. I hope I have paid none but to persons whom the Treasury order'd me to obey.

"In that belief, and that I can prove the payments, I am easy. I hope you'll tell me, that in these two points I do not presume too much. And I am easier, because now I believe it will be Ld H.¹ and not G.G. If so, Oswald will be Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was one of the Tr. when these orders were given. He will certainly have neither whim nor ill will; nor think, if I know him, of raising his character by making difficulties.

"Upon the whole, my dear Sir, let all diligence be us'd to bring this matter forward. Some friends press me much to quit the Pay Office now. I won't. But do you think it will do me any good to declare I will quit it at Xmas?"

Nicholl's letter, however, was not without its effect. In fact, it may have influenced Fox to make one last effort to turn Bute from his purpose, by the novel suggestion contained in the following letter:

"MY DEAR LORD,

"The prospect of the K.'s affairs next winter appears to me more and more cloudy, and the danger to be so great, that I could never forgive myself if I did not give you this advice. Your Lordship won't take it; but I shall have given it. Let people think to the eve of next sessions, that *H.M.'s affairs are to be in the same*

¹ Lord Halifax.

hands next year as they have been this. Make no alterations now but a few necessary ones. Pass the Commons as idly as is consistent with keeping up this supposition ; and surely that will not hurt your health, for you may pass it very idly. *Let me go to Spa, &c., Paymaster. Just before the Parlt meets your Lordship will go away ; and I may, if H.M. pleases, go into the H. of Lords.* The Opposition will be disarm'd and confounded ; and before they have put their battle in array again, the sessions will be over. Yr Lordsp must see the use of this, and foresee the difficulties and train of mischiefs which will follow a change now. I wish your reason and not your feeling may determine." ¹

In any case, Fox seems to have instructed Calcraft to hint to Shelburne that he might still reconsider his refusal to succeed Bute. Calcraft did so. Granted certain conditions, he wrote, he would look on Fox as very preferable to Grenville at the head of affairs ; and implored Shelburne to give the proposal his careful consideration.

" We both know Mr Fox in lights I should rejoice we did not. Yesterday was but a confirmation of what I had before seen. Before I proceed further, therefore, let me promise, if you are not sure of getting and keeping the King to yourself, at least from *him*, don't harbour any the smallest thought of accepting his offer. If you are, he will act agreeably and look up to you ; if not, I am

¹ The suggested position of this letter must be accepted with the greatest reserve. A draft of it appears on the back of one to Lord Bute, which can with confidence be dated March 27 (see p. 245). The docket in Fox's handwriting, " March, I believe the 24," is all we have to go upon ; but this may refer to either of the letters, and is untrustworthy. Possibly the paper was never sent at all, as presumably it does not appear in the Harrowby collection of Lord Bute's correspondence, to which Lord Fitzmaurice had access.

The sentence, *Let me go to Spa, etc., Paymaster*, seems at first sight to point to a period subsequent to the 24th. Yet Fox was in such constant communication with Bute during those days that it seems almost impossible to find a place there for the letter. Besides, the question of his retirement had evidently been raised before the 22nd, though not in an acute form. Therefore he might well have referred to it.

sorry to say you know what will be the case ; you know too all his weaknesses—George Grenville's you can only guess at. There is a possibility of our influencing and correcting the one, though not the other.

“ In this light it is worth your consideration whether you should or should not try to get him the Treasury. He has ability, his friends have confidence in him, and the world in general an opinion of his talents for this station. What may be his meaning at the bottom of this offer, made under the influence of his brother, should be weigh'd also. I believe he'll get the Treasury, but there may be some foresight in case of its refusal, though upon my honour he has not hinted a word more than I have told you.”¹

By this time in all probability Bute was too far committed with Grenville to give Fox a second chance, for we hear no more of the matter.

¹ H. Calcraft to Shelburne, March 22, 1763 (*Life of Shelburne*. i. 159).

CHAPTER XXVIII

A FEW days later a bolt fell from an almost cloudless sky. Fox, to his horror and amazement, discovered that he was expected to surrender the Pay Office in exchange for the peerage; and worse still, that he was believed to have given his promise to do so.

For some time he had been pestered with representations on the subject of his resignation.

Calcraft wrote to Shelburne¹:

"I have had a very long and very firm conversation with Mr Fox about the Pay Office, and gave him my reasons for quitting it as sincerely as I feel them. Lady Holland was by, and they made impressions upon her. They were not without effect on him, though he would not give way. His brother talked to him all last night to keep his place, and said your Lordship and I should yield to reason. I replied that reason was with us, that money was more Lord Ilchester's consideration than we wish'd it, and that he who liv'd out of the world was not the fittest judge what would please in it; in short, I did my best, and will for Mr Fox's sake continue my persuasion to a measure on which his credit so much depends. I stated this advice to Lord Bute and the comparison that would be drawn, that people would say he was afraid to leave the Office open to inspection, &c. Rigby promises to speak to Mr Fox to-night his opinion, which is strong with us."

Fox had paid but little attention to these hints. The offer of the vacant Pay Office might prove very useful for Bute to attach Granby or some other waverer to the

¹ March 21, 1763 (Lansdowne MSS.). Not March 15, the date given by Lord Fitzmaurice (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 151).

King's service.¹ But he saw no obligation to place it at the disposal of the court. In his opinion, the boot was on the other leg. Peace had been secured by his exertions, and no reward should therefore be considered excessive.

The efforts of Calcraft and Rigby having failed, Shelburne proceeded to try his powers of persuasion. But Fox was beginning to become restive under these repeated attempts to dislodge him. He announced that he had made up his mind to see the King next day, in order to inform him that he had never intended, and did not intend to resign. He appears as yet to have had no inkling of the real state of affairs—that the fulfilment of a promise was in question, and that Bute and the King were under the belief that he had definitely pledged his word. Nor did Shelburne enlighten him at this interview.² His reticence on this very material point is difficult to understand, if he was as certain of his ground as he afterwards made out. It would seem that he was anxious not to refer to the bargain except as a last resource. He wrote to Bute that he did not wish to appear afterwards "more unkind than necessary." Yet the kindest and most straightforward course would have been to remind his friend of the compact which he was continually quoting behind his back.

As Fox refused to change his mind, Shelburne suggested that Bute should himself point out how unreasonable he was "to expect to go to the House of Lords, and to go abroad with a great place and £10,000 a year for himself, his brother and Lord Digby."³ The interview took place on the 25th, but on the previous day Shelburne had

¹ See *Life of Shelburne*, i. 162.

² Fox categorically stated that he first learnt the fact from Shelburne two days later, the 24th (*ibid.*, i. 152).

³ Shelburne to Bute, March 22, 1763 (*ibid.*, i. 150). Lord Digby was made a Lord of the Admiralty in April. Ilchester, as we shall see, was disappointed of his hopes. We are unable to discover what post Fox contemplated for him.

again talked to Fox, and this time had drawn attention to his belief in a definite promise. The Paymaster displayed the utmost surprise, and did not restrain his feelings. Shelburne in consequence drew up a justification, which he gave to Calcraft.¹ Fox called upon the latter in the afternoon, and was shewn the paper.

“Soon after I got home [wrote Calcraft], Mr Fox came here, and found Rigby and me. He began the conversation I expected, but calmly. I gave him your paper, which he read, and dwelt on the first part: that he never imagined you had said by his authority he would quit the Pay Office. I told him, if giving the opinion was what he took ill, I must take part of the blame, for I had given it as mine that he would part with the Pay Office, and that he wanted to get rid of it. He wondered Lord Bute had never mentioned this matter to him, and a great deal of the same discourse that passed in the morning, but calm. Rigby reasoned a great deal; we talked upon his brother, Lord Digby and other requests, but he seems determined now to keep the office, doubts or pretends to doubt whether he shall go to the House of Lords. I told him Lord Bute never harboured a thought of his keeping Paymasters’ when he retired, and that the opinion you gave was to make his other requests come with better grace, and what you thought a right one. I am sorry he does not prove our opinion founded. I am sure it was his, and wish from my soul it had continued so.”²

Shelburne replied to Calcraft the same evening, that upon the maturest reflection he could see nothing in their conduct which could furnish Mr Fox with a just pretence of being offended; but he regretted that he, Calcraft, was becoming mixed up in the business. On the 26th, the latter again saw Fox, and wrote to Shelburne later

¹ This document is not forthcoming. The paper which Lord Fitzmaurice makes use of to fill the gap must belong to a later period in the correspondence (see p. 249).

² H. Calcraft to Shelburne, March 25, 1763 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 160).

in the day. He had told Fox, he said, that he felt convinced that a few months hence he would take a very different view of their friendship from what he now seemed to do. Rigby seems again to have been present. Fox was cool "but positive." He complained of Shelburne for giving an opinion for him, which he said no man should do for another. Calcraft was also "unalterable." "I told him no longer since than Tuesday, I thought myself sure from his own mouth he would quit now or at midsummer at farthest, and that I was, by his request, hurrying warrants that he should do so."¹

And so, on Thursday the 24th, Fox had learnt from Shelburne's lips that Bute expected him to fulfil an undertaking to retire from the Pay Office. Next day he received a fresh shock. He made the discovery from Bute himself that the King was also counting on his resignation. What was to be done? Again he consulted Mr Nicholl.

"DEAR SIR,

"I send you my yesterday's scheme No. 1, and this day's scheme No. 2. Consider them well and very freely.

"Yours ever,

"H. F.

"March 26, 1763."

Fox and Nicholl had met on the previous day, before his meeting with Bute. They had fully discussed a memorandum which Fox had then produced.² His plan was to give a promise to vacate the Pay Office at Christ-

¹ H. Calcraft to Shelburne, March 26, 1763 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 162).

² This paper is printed by Lord Fitzmaurice as addressed to Lord Bute (*ibid.*, i. 151). A draft is among the papers at Holland House. This is simply docketed "P. Office"; and there is nothing to shew for whom it was written. We have no hesitation, however, in identifying this as the memorandum referred to by Fox as "Scheme I"; but he probably also used it as a basis for his interview with the First Lord and presented it to him on that occasion.

mas, remaining until then in the House of Commons. But if the King expressed an urgent need for immediate possession of the post, he would openly announce that he did not relinquish it voluntarily, and would in that case refuse to take a peerage at all.

“ My opinion cannot and ought not to stand in the way of His Majesty’s interest or conscience. But with regard to my private honour and feelings it must be absolute. Had I been consulted I would have found some way of reconciling His Majesty’s wishes with my opinion ; but that has not been the case, and I am supposed out of my employment, without being myself allowed to be a party to my own resignation. I cannot reconcile this to myself, or stand a moment against the general opinion which must prevail that I am not let to keep the office. I shall be laughed at, and laugh myself at the pretence that I resign voluntarily what I have had no opportunity given me of even speaking about. Lord Shelburne (and perhaps others with less reason) has said I intended to resign, without telling me he intended to say so, or that he had said so. I never heard of or imagined this till Thursday, and find both Lord Bute and the King had taken it for granted. It is not only true, but I can prove it to be so, that since January last I never could intend to resign now. Let me add, that, if I had intended it, Lord Bute’s going would have changed my resolution. It is amazing that in all the conversations I have had with Lord Bute, he never gave me the least hint of this supposition.¹ It is still more so, that Lord Shelburne never did till Thursday last. But things being in the unexpected situation they are, what am I to do ? All I can do is this : if the King and Lord Bute, keeping it the greatest secret, can help the King’s affairs by knowing that my office shall be resigned next Xmas, His Majesty is most welcome to it, and in that case I will not be a peer now. If His Majesty’s want of

¹ Lord Fitzmaurice alludes to Bute’s resignation, and states that there is no reason to suppose that Shelburne had any earlier notice of it than Fox, but “ *this supposition* ” most clearly refers to the latter’s supposed promise to retire from the Pay Office.

my place to give away now should be so urgent that it cannot be deferred, I must submit, and beg to show that it is not voluntarily, or to be called so, my Lord, that I part with it. I can wish His Majesty's affairs well in the House of Commons to as much purpose as in the House of Lords, and my imagination is so struck that, thanking His Majesty for having satisfied all that is essential of my ambition regarding peerage, an obligation I never will forget, I desire at all events to remain myself a commoner."

Fox's proposals were unsympathetically received by Bute. For that reason, perhaps, he drafted Scheme No. 2.¹

"DEAR SIR,

"I have slept since, and though I see the usage I meet with and ever shall see it in the same light, I am inclined to a very different conclusion than ours of yesterday. I impart it to you, and to nobody else except Lady Caroline, and I write it thus, that you may put your thoughts in the margin; and I am far from having decided anything.

"It is very unpleasant after all that has happened, to go away out of humour. Dissembled satisfaction is better than dissatisfaction, which it would be against my whole scheme of life to take any revenge of. I can undoubtedly keep my place, but they will be much out of humour, and the memory of what vexes will be much more lasting than that of what once pleased them. On the other hand,

¹ This document, reproduced, with Nicholl's reply, by Lord Fitzmaurice (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 153-155), is at Holland House. We cannot agree with his statement that the docket, "about April 10," on the back of the paper, was not written by Fox. The words are unmistakably in his handwriting; but many of his endorsements at this period bear the stamp of having been added at some later date. Too much reliance, therefore, must not be placed upon them. In this case there is no difficulty in dating Fox's memorandum. Another copy of Nicholl's remarks on it, also in his own handwriting, is in existence, which varies in some minor details from the printed version. It is written on the same sheet as Fox's own covering letter to Nicholl of March 26, and is also dated "Saturday."

common and easy civility will follow the accommodating them and being quite out of the world. If I keep my place and remain a commoner, there will be disguising the discontent there will be on each side.

"They will be ashamed of this, and hate me the more for it. For these reasons, and above all for my own ease, suppose I go on Wednesday next, without imparting my design even to Lord Bute, and tell the King that it is not convenient to me, and was neither my design nor as I believe His Majesty's, that this session should end in my losing my place; but that as His Majesty had been led into a belief unwarranted by me that it was my desire, and had thought of arrangements in consequence of it, I could not think of ending a session by being inconvenient to him, which I begun with so very different a view. And therefore, only desiring that he would appoint A. B. to carry on my office till midsummer, I begged leave to resign now; and my successor would be as well satisfied with a nomination to take place then as on this day.

"I should have a great deal of dissembled praise and desire that I would stay, which I would take as if it was sincere, but, persisting in my resolution to disobey His Majesty, go. I think he would forgive me that disobedience, and perhaps be so pleased with it as to let me go away, with appearance of obligation to me for what I have done. And his joy that I resign may be mistaken for his being pleased with me that I came, which will be more favourable for us both.

"My remaining in the House of Commons, and in a situation to struggle if I will, is not, my dear Mr Nicholl, that perfect tranquillity you wish me in.

"That can only be had in the House of Lords, the world forgetting, by the world forgot. Think over this impartially. I could not think about it early yesterday, nor I believe you neither."

Shortly, Fox had now in his mind to tell the King that his views had been completely misrepresented, but that, as he was loath to incommode his Majesty's arrangements, he would resign the Pay Office at once, asking only that it should be carried on in his name till midsummer, *i.e.* to the

end of the current quarter. This was the usual procedure in the case of the retirement of a Paymaster. As regards the peerage his views had undergone some alteration. He was now intent on retiring at once to the House of Lords, to enjoy tranquillity, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot."

Nicholl argued strongly against this course. As long as Fox remained in the Commons, the court was bound to humour him, and to grant him all he asked. But once he was shelved, they would safely be able to disregard his wishes.

Fox was not to be turned from his purpose; and presented Bute with these new suggestions unaltered, in a letter dated March 27¹:

"I never went out of your room dissatisfied till Friday. I did so then, and have been fluctuating ever since in the consideration of what conduct I have left me to pursue. I will begin with that frankness which I think your Lordship has been wanting in towards me. You have seen me often since you had been informed that I intended to resign my place at the end of this session, which I vow to God I never thought of doing; and your Lordship has never mentioned it to me or given me the most distant hint. Surely, my Lord, I had a right to be talked to upon my own business before the King had formed a notion of my intention. You heard it from several other friends of mine, as well as from Lord Shelburne. It would have been kind to have mentioned it to me the next visit after you first heard of it. You would then have known how much you was misinformed. I don't desire to know who these friends of mine were; but not having the same opinion of them as Lord Shelburne, I should think they had some bad design in it. There are very few, who, collecting my opinion, could tell it your Lordship on a point that regarded me so nearly without letting me know it, that I should think honest men and wishing me extremely well. I do think so of

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 156. The draft in the Holland House papers contains slight variations from the printed text.

Lord Shelburne. He imagined his judgment much better than mine, and that my notions of honor (as different from his as commonsense is from romance) must at last be got the better of ; and in this warmth could think he was serving me by giving his opinion for mine, without my leave or knowledge before or afterwards. This want of knowledge of the world or the common rules among men would have been corrected, had your Lordship communicated to me what I had not the least idea of till Friday, viz. that the King had built upon my resignation, which I had no opportunity ever given me to speak about. I am supposed out of my employment, but I think I know your Lordship to be an honest man and incapable of any insincerity, and therefore with as much frankness and sincerity as I have, I have wrote what I have wrote. I acquit your Lordship of any sinister design. I have now, my dear Lord, unburthened my mind, whether wisely or no I cannot tell, but with a view to have everything between us as well as it ever was. And in the belief that it will be so, I proceed to tell you, *and you only*, my intention. I will go to His Majesty and tell him I am sorry he has built on a mistake ; but since it has been so, I will never leave it possible for myself to think that I, who came to do him all the service that was in my power at the beginning of the session (and I hope did him some), should leave him in difficulties increased by any action of mine. I shall therefore beg leave to resign *now*, and shall have the pride to think, and the hope that His Majesty will think I have done my duty *perfectly*. The world will say and think I am turned out ; will say this is the reward I meet with, and that such a bad man as I am ought to meet with, that the Duke of Devonshire's prophecy to my brother is fulfilled, &c., &c., &c.

“ To know that I am a truly honest man, and that the King and you must think me so, shall outweigh the sense of all this scurrility in my mind.

“ If you think you can outweigh this opinion in other people, by what His Majesty may at the same time be pleased to do with my brother and Lord Digby, and myself in point of rank, I shall be glad if you do it and it succeeds ; at all events I shall keep a consciousness

of having done right and that good humour that always accompanies such a consciousness. I then am determined, my Lord, to resign immediately, but must beg His Majesty to appoint A. B. to carry on the office till midsummer (which is alone a proof how well Lord Shelburne knew my intention). But my resignation known and published now will make the nomination of my successor as effectual to His Majesty's purposes as if he could immediately execute the office, which indeed was never done. Pitt, turned out in November 1756, was desired to let the books be carried on in his name till Xmas; and when Winnington died in April 1746, a person was appointed, though Pitt had kissed hands, to carry it on in Winnington's name till midsummer. I shall see your Lordship early on Monday.

"And now, my Lord, assuring you upon my word of honour that I go out with the same inclination and the same sincere good wishes to your Lordship, as if there had been no mistake and this has been, as you thought it, my own desire from the first, I will suppose that I am entitled to that friendship which you promised me, which I will return and cultivate with the utmost cordiality."

Bute replied the same evening:

"You must excuse me, if notwithstanding all you say I cannot feel myself in the least deficient with regard to you, in any one point of honour, friendship or regard. I heard from your own friends a thing that suited so exactly my feelings that I never thought more about it, and when you surprised me by saying I was misinformed, I acquiesced in your being the best judge of your own conduct, knowing full well that in all events the King would leave it to your option. But I shall say more of this when we meet, that I beg may be on Tuesday at ten instead of to-morrow." ¹

Next day, Fox saw the King. "He behaved with great sourness, and the King with great dignity as regarded

¹ March 27, 1763. Lord Fitzmaurice dates this letter March 26. Bute, however, heads it "Sunday night"—clearly the 27th.

Lord Shelburne.”¹ The Paymaster seems to have been unable to bring himself to actual resignation, and extracted a promise instead from His Majesty that his retirement should be “optional.” Notwithstanding this success, his annoyance with Shelburne was every day increasing. Difficulties were beginning to arise concerning the favours which he had planned for his various relations. To Bute’s announcement that his former friend must have the Board of Trade in any reconstruction of the Ministry, he could only reply: “With regard to Lord Shelburne, as upon recollection I am more and more hurt with his conduct towards me, I think it quite unnecessary to say anything else than that I am very glad he has behaved in a way so agreeable to your Lordship.”² And a few days later, he proceeded to break off all personal relations. “As every mortification I met with,” he wrote to Calcraft, “and they are many, is the consequence of Lord Shelburne’s conduct, I believe it were better we should have no conversation together on the matter. I do not mean that he intended what has happened, it may be quite the contrary, but nothing disagreeable could have happened had I been trusted with my own affair. He ought to know what I took ill. That he should for months together know that the Minister and the King imagined I intended to resign, and never tell me that they thought so, was not fair, and has been fatal, unless to a man determined to leave the world it may be some advantage to be quite sick of it.”³

Calcraft replied to Fox on April 9, and lamented his attitude towards Shelburne. “I thought the best way of executing your commands was to show Lord Shelburne your letter, which I have done, and enclos’d is his reply.”⁴

Shelburne’s remarks ran as follows:

“On reflecting upon the whole of what has passed

¹ Bute to Shelburne, March 29, 1763 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 162).

² Bute to H. Fox; H. Fox to Bute, March 29, 1763.

³ April 7, 1763 (*Life of Shelburne*, i. 162).

⁴ H. Calcraft to H. Fox, April 9, 1763 (Lansdowne MSS.).

between Mr Fox and me, I take nothing ill, but I own I am astonished. My conduct with regard to Mr Fox's Paymastership has been most simple. I said what I thought would have been his conduct. It passed as conversation, it was not built upon, nor no arrangement made in consequence. The event plainly proves it. If Mr Fox thinks he could have gone out with grace with more than he has by any intercession of mine, he is entirely mistaken. I am very sorry that the King, Lord Bute and, I am afraid, all the world, think it should have been. . . . Upon the whole, my conduct has in this, as well as in former instances, been directed by my joint regard to Mr Fox, and to the authority and dignity of the King and his Administration. Let him reflect on the manner of the language of his coming in, what he has declined, and what he possesses going out ; and then let him consider the conduct of his friends, and I am sure he cannot accuse them of want of communication or of the regard due to whatever friendship he may have justly expected at their hands." ¹

Fox replied to Calcraft ² :

" Lord Shelburne avoids the point, as well he may. Why did he for five months know what the K. and Ld B. expected with regard to me, and never tell me ? If this was fair I am mistaken, and hence flow all that I, with so much reason, am uneasy at.

" Was this the friendly communication that you wish had continued ? Friendly of my side indeed, for I hid nothing from Ld Shelburne. What his Lordship means, when he says I could not accuse my friends of want of communication, I can't imagine. I do accuse him of it, and have *told* the instance which lasted for so many months together and has been fatal to me. His Lordship speaks of his *intercession*. I do not chuse to criticize the

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 160. The paper is dated " Friday," *i.e.* April 8. Lord Fitzmaurice has placed it at an earlier period in the correspondence ; but it must clearly be taken in conjunction with the subsequent reply from Fox to Calcraft (Lansdowne MSS.), which seems to have been overlooked.

² Probably April 10, 1763. This letter is clearly the last of the series.

word. I complain singly and solely that my opinion, or what was thought to be my intention, was conveyed to Lord Bute and the King, and I kept in ignorance that it was so, and consequently acting in the dark. His Lordship would have me consider about other things, what I *possess*, though going out. What is there more than having obeyed His Majesty's commands, and done all that was required of me for six months, I am not turned out? What do I possess more than I possess'd last September?

"Now a word to you, Mr Calcraft.

"You, with Lord Shelburne, were the chief adviser and cause of my coming in, losing my friends, making many enemies, and risking health, ease, etc. Now consider what you propose, at least all that I think you propose as my reward—the honour and glory of succeeding and being quite out of employment. You have latterly said, a Cabinet Counsellor's place in the House of Lords: but that was never propos'd, as it certainly should have been, if I had not been industriously kept from the knowledge of my own situation. Now, my being permitted to keep my employment is reckon'd a favour; that the King renews his promise to my brother, which should have been perform'd now, is another favour.

"And you, when you can hear or find an answer to the question that the paper begins with, let me know it.

"In the mean time, I shall trust to my own weak understanding for the only point I have now to carry, the restoring myself to good humour."

How can we account for this outburst of animosity against Shelburne? Up to March 27 or 28, Fox wrote of him more in sorrow than in anger, and made no imputation of dishonourable conduct against him. Even on the 31st, he announced his intention of being on good terms with him.¹ But subsequently his wrath got the upper hand. Before long he had reached the stage of proclaiming him "a perfidious and infamous liar."² Was Fox's venom simply due to the reflection that he had

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 166.

² *Walpole's Memoirs*, i. 257.

been badly treated, or did he believe that he had lighted on some proof that Shelburne's conduct was part of a fixed scheme to deceive him? His irritation was unquestionably increased by the thought that he was unable to assist his brother. Walpole hints that Shelburne was scheming to obtain the Pay Office for himself. But no evidence is forthcoming to shew that he was minded to step into Fox's shoes. His ample fortune made him independent of pecuniary considerations, and his youthful ambition was directed to higher planes. Indeed, Fox does not suggest it, in the telling indictment against him which he set down on paper at Lord Kildare's request at the end of April.

“ Your suspicion of what Ld S. wd do is exactly what he has done. Mr Calcraft, I cannot tell why, join'd with him in continually pressing me to resign the Pay Office, and I am told, which is very possible, that to them I sometimes said I wd. But Ld S., it seems, as long ago as November last, assured Ld Bute, and thro' him the K., that it was my fixed determination ; and by frequent and constant affirmation of it kept Ld Bute in that opinion, while with an hypocrisy, dissimulation and art, which I should have thought few old, and no young, man capable of, he kept me in ignorance that they ever had such a notion. It is about a month ago that, struck with the chance expression, I ask'd Ld S. if Ld B. had any idea that I intended to resign. He faltered, and sd he believ'd so. I flew to Ld B., who said he never doubted it. Ld S. had told him so from the first as my determin'd intention, not any other body's for me, and all my friends had said so. Those proved to be Ld S. friends, sent by him to say so. And take notice, that if ever I did say even to them in private that I wd resign, I oftener said I wd not ; and at three different times told Ld S. I intended to ask the K. to join Ld Digby with me in it, and about Jany last I was above a month in that intention. Ld S. deprecated this exceedingly ; but all the while kept Ld B. in the opinion he had before given him. I undeceiv'd Ld Bute, who I must say behav'd very well to

me. But their new arrangements were disturb'd and hamper'd ; my declining to take the ministry in Mr Grenville's, late Ld Bute's, employment, perhaps displeased the K. My brother's views, tho' promised, were defeated ; I was sour'd, and found too late Mr Dryden's precept true,

" Of all court service learn the common lot,
To-day 'tis done—to-morrow 'tis forgot,"

and myself a fool for making this court an exception to that general rule.

" Why Ld S. told Ld B. what he thought to be my intention, and why he in five months' intimate conversation, which very often turn'd on the subject, never let me know it, are questions to which Ld S. gives no answer. But (say they, who think I am too angry with him for this) what view could he have in this? The more I recollect what passed between us, the worse opinion I have of him, and I believe his cunning was this. He did not think he could so well pave the way to what he intended as by having my place to dispose of, as well as some other great ones, which he took great pains to vacate too. I think I could exactly account for his thoughts on the occasion these last months, since he had it in his view to be Secretary of State. He did his best to prevent Lord Granby from going to Ireland, in hopes to tempt Ld E. or Ld H.¹ with that. If that, or the President got Ld E. out of his way, then what could he do with Mr Townshend? He told me he wished the Pay Office to him, and pretended to know that Townshend himself wished it of all things. Then the Board of Trade (which he has got) would be opened to him ; or, if he succeeded in his greater view of Secy of State, to his friend Oswald, a very honest and able man, and who would have done the very important business of that place, and Ld S. would have taken part, if not all, the honour. Now it will not be done at all, and yet I know nothing so material to this country at present as that it should, and well. The difficulty of doing so will not frighten Ld S. He is the most presumptuous of men ; but other qualities than

¹ Egremont and Halifax.

his low flattery, little cunning and meddling disposition will be requisite."

There can be no doubt that when Fox first undertook the management of the House of Commons in the autumn, he believed that he would be expected to give up the Pay Office. "I cannot help thinking of your advice," he wrote to Nicholl, "and that there is great likelihood of my following it. Think then of arrangements; with regard to those I leave in the office, with regard to who should succeed me, whether one or two Joint-Paymasters, and who; and with regard to my affairs and my friends in the office as they may be affected by them."¹

But a few days later he again addressed his friend in an altered frame of mind.

"Thank you very kindly for your letter. When I wrote mine I thought the step very proper to be taken, and saw it in a light in which its propriety appeared to me greater than it appears now. I likewise thought of Legge, and believed (though for some reasons which you don't mention, and not for all those you do) he would have had the offer of it. But now I have great doubts of making the vacancy. Instead of what I expected, I believe that in no fortnight since the year 1756 have I ever been less abused than in this last. The better sort want a system that they can think will last, and therefore like this arrangement, without any particular regard for me; and the language is very general that I came in very unwillingly and by command. Such language, you know, is very favourable. There are who say I ought to have been Secretary of State, that the minister in the House of Commons ought for the honour of the House to have a very high place, and these would like it still less if I had none at all. I would not have you think that I believe nobody abuses me, though it is not in the strain and with the fury and in general as I expected among those who did abuse. It was said I was to have a great sum of money for making the peace; this I had from one who heard it. It immediately struck me that what I was going

¹ October 18, 1762.

to do would be no prevention of this abuse, or perhaps rather give a colour to it, and be esteemed as affectation of disinterestedness put on to cover some great job.”¹

At that time Shelburne was employed by Bute as negotiator between him and Fox. He was young and inexperienced in the handling of such delicate undertakings. He knew that Fox had spoken of retirement, and believed that he would yield to pressure when the time came. But he neglected to question him as to the real meaning of his vague and contradictory assertions. “My conduct with regard to Mr Fox’s Paymastership has been most simple,” he explained subsequently. “I said what I thought would have been his conduct.” Here Shelburne was clearly in error. To proceed upon supposition in such cases is but to foment trouble. His methods were faulty and injudicious. He volunteered statements to Bute which he hoped might come true, but omitted to verify them. They did not materialise, and consequently misunderstanding succeeded misunderstanding.

Fox was too wary to be caught by devices such as these. The belief that he ever pledged himself to resign in definite terms rests on Shelburne’s word, and the latter’s reluctance to speak out unreservedly in the early stages of the controversy diminishes the value of his testimony.

We cannot avoid the feeling, during a perusal of the foregoing correspondence, that Shelburne lacked frankness in his relations with Henry Fox. There lay the weak side of his nature. The statement that his reputation for craftiness and unreliability dates from this episode is not wholly correct. Kildare and Walpole both express a previous conviction that he was not to be trusted.²

¹ H. Fox to J. L. Nicholl, October 24, 1762.

² “I must own I never had a good opinion of him, and wonder’d much at your partiality to him. I always look upon him as a spy, who would try to find out your thoughts of men and things, to make use of them. I find as the saying is, that he is his mother’s own son, who has as much low cunning and hypocrisy as any of her sex ever had, as I have been told” (Kildare to H. Fox, April 23, 1763).

Be this as it may, Fox unmistakably considered himself at liberty to act as he thought fit. We have seen that he decided, when first he accepted office, that no necessity to surrender the post had arisen. Was it likely that he would see any reason to do so, when he was regarded in some circles as Bute's equal,¹ at a moment when he exulted in the peace as a personal triumph?

We attach little credence to the story of the "pious fraud"—the name by which the whole dispute has become known in the annals of the eighteenth century. Walpole tells us that Bute made use of the phrase when Fox was speaking to him of Shelburne's treachery. "I can see the fraud plainly enough," retorted the Paymaster, "but where is the piety?" The fact that Bute accepted Shelburne's conduct as "agreeable to himself,"² is proof almost sufficient to damn the tale. But further than this, Walpole bases his account of the quarrel on grounds which are certainly incorrect. He says that Shelburne knew in October of Bute's resolve to throw up the Treasury; that he concealed it from Fox; and that this was the cause of the breach. There is no mention, as we have seen, of any such reference in the correspondence. Fox, it is true, would never have sacrificed his ease and independence, had he realised that Bute would so soon be leaving him in the lurch. But we have no proof that Shelburne was sufficiently in the favourite's confidence at that time to have been informed of his intentions. Nor are we certain that Bute had made up his mind when he would take the plunge. His confidences to Grenville were of the vaguest description.³

Of Calcraft's conduct, and of that of Rigby, the less that is said the better. There was little to choose between the two vipers which Fox had nursed so long in his bosom.

"What can I say has been Calcraft's view? Why he was so eager that I should quit the Pay Office I really

¹ Walpole's *Letters*, v. 290.

² *Life of Shelburne*, i. 166.

³ See *ante*, ii. 199.

cannot imagine, unless he was fool enough to be taken in by Ld S.'s romantic nonsense of the beautiful lustre it would add to my character, to quit a *dirty* and *pecuniary* employment and shew my enemies by so doing that I had a *beautiful mind*. If so, I have nothing to say against him for advising me to do it ; and I protest I can guess at no other motive. But then, when things turned out as they have done, why has he lived with Ld S. ever since (they are inseparable), and hardly ever called upon me, and now quitted all acquaintance with me for ever? Can there be any other reason than that I am certainly for ever out of power or possibility of it, and that he can scheme with Ld S. all day long? If he thinks the hatred people have for me, to which my too great kindness to him has not a little contributed, he is much mistaken. He is already infinitely abused, and indeed I do not know one man in the world so much obliged to another, as he has been to me. I loved him ; I did not expect this, and I have not yet left off thinking of it. When I complained to Rigby, he receiv'd it as he wd a complaint of Sr Thomas Robinson's : he desired to hear nothing of it. Ld S. abused me and I abused him ; he wd have nothing to do with it, and yet join'd Ld S. and Ct, and has liv'd with them ever since. I loved him too. I must not omit to tell you that I cannot learn that they have anything to say, or that they do say anything but that they think Ld S. did not mean me ill, and that I have been too angry. This is saying nothing for themselves, you see, my Lord, and here is an end of my too long story." ¹

Calcraft owed everything to his relative's assistance and consideration.² Their association had brought him political advancement and unlimited wealth. "Don't impute Calcraft's exorbitant riches to me," wrote Fox some years later. "I gave him, and was continually giving him, the means. But the use he made of those means was not inspired, nor was he assisted in it, by me."³

¹ "Narrative for Lord Kildare."

² He seems to have been a distant cousin, by intermarriage between his family and that of Fox's mother, the Hopes,

³ Holland to J. Campbell, April 20, 1768,

He had profited to the full. Yet without the slightest hesitation he turned on his benefactor, when the latter's day of usefulness seemed past. Baseness and ingratitude were personified in his treatment of his friend and patron. He may indeed have believed in the existence of Fox's promise. But his cant phrases on the relation between the Paymaster's honour and his retirement are not convincing. The real character of the man stands out vividly in his professions of attachment to the rising star. Want of principle is revealed in every thought and deed.

And what of Rigby? He was beholden to Fox in greater measure even than Calcraft for assistance in public life. He had never been absent from his friend's thoughts when it was in his power to push his interests. Fox really loved him, and there can be no doubt that his apostasy caused the bitterest reflections of the former's declining years.¹ Nothing could be more cruel and callous than Rigby's mode of breaking off their relations. He had been stopped in his carriage in St James's Street by Fox, who proceeded to enlarge upon the ill-treatment which he had received from Shelburne and Calcraft. His complaints were interrupted by the unfeeling remark, "*You tell your story of Shelburne; he has a damned one to tell of you; I do not trouble myself which is the truth.*" He then pushed Fox aside, and called to his coachman to drive on.² The insult was studied. During the session, before any sort of coolness had arisen between him and Fox, he had amazed Onslow, who was no friend of the Paymaster, by saying, "That man," pointing to Fox, "is torn to pieces between his ambition and his avarice."³

Fox made one important discovery in the course of his interview with the King on March 28. He found

¹ "My nature is not proof against what I have met with from Calcraft, and from one I lov'd much better" (Holland to J. L. Nicholl, September 14, 1763).

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 263; "Narrative for Lord Kildare,"

³ C. J. Fox to Holland, September 9, 1763.

that he was to be forced to take a seat in the House of Lords, whether he resigned the Pay Office or no. He took advantage of this fact to turn the court's fears to good account, and from that moment began to increase his demands. He applied to Bute, on the 31st, for a viscountship, as a proof that His Majesty was "more than ordinarily satisfied with him"; wishing that his family should take precedence over Lady Chatham, who was a baroness in her own right.¹ For a few days he disappeared to Kingsgate, whence he wrote to his wife on April 3: "All my thoughts cheerful or other, for I have had both, confirm me in resolving to have done with all for ever now except the Pay Office, and of that in time; of which time I will be master." He returned to London on the 5th, and wrote again to Lady Holland next day, in the throes of an attack of asthma. "I am to see the K. to-morrow, having spoke very freely to Lord Bute this morning. I rather think I shall be a visct. Ld Digby will have the Admiralty, with promise of peerage. My brother must, thanks to Ld Shelburne, wait. Lord Bute resigns Thursday. There are no secrets, except my rank."

On the same day, he wrote to Ilchester regarding the request which he had made for him. "The more I think of the whole affair the more angry I am, and therefore I daresay the conversation I am going to will end very unpleasantly. I shall therefore give my opinion, but leave your declining, etc., etc., etc., to be done by yourself."² His prognostications proved correct. "I found no inclination to me or my request. Among some fine words, I saw in reality all my service was forgot, or perhaps remembered with dislike. I shew'd mine of such an audience."³

Thus rebuffed, Fox made one more half-hearted attempt to remain in the House of Commons.

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 163.

² H. Fox to Ilchester, April 6, 1763.

³ H. Fox to Lady Holland, April 8, 1763.

“ Having heard that the K. is displeased at my having left him in uncertainty whether I accept the barony or no, I intend to-morrow to tell Ld Bute, that perfectly sensible that by Ld Shelburne’s practices the disappointment of my not resigning has entirely effaced the sense of my merit in coming in, I shall ask no favour, but that he would tell me honestly whether the K. will be offended if I decline. If he, *bona fide*, will not, I shall chuse to remain Mr H. Fox. This, I suppose, will end in the H. of Lords.”¹

But to Nicholl, enclosing a letter which he proposed to send to Bute, he wrote :

“ It was plain that I could not remain in the H. of Commons without incurring great hatred, where there already is no love. Why incur hatred, which for my own sake I never would return ? So I wrote this morning and shall send the inclos’d. I don’t tell you the first paragraph is sincere.”²

The letter to Bute reads as follows :

“ I assure your Lordsp, and will assure everybody, that in all I feel I have from you nothing to complain of ; and I now write to you as my friend. I hate my situation, searching for a path that may lead me to my lost good-humour. But I must chuse one, and your conversation yesterday shews me that I must not think of staying in the House of Commons without incurring the King’s displeasure. It would be a great mortification to me, if, after, I won’t say sacrificing, but risking everything to please, I should be so unhappy as to fail in it. I therefore beg your Lordsp to tell the King that I accept cheerfully whatever he thinks fit.

“ And now, my dear Lord, manage for me as well as you can the remains, if there are any, of past favour. If I may point out anything, it should be that at Xmas next, or when I quit the Pay Office, and it may be so managed, H.M. may think of giving me the Privy Seal.

¹ H. Fox to J. Campbell, April 10, 1763.

² April 12, 1763.

The Privy Seal is £2,300 a year, the Pay Office double. But this would be a distinguished mark of H.M.'s approbation of my conduct, which would at the same time make me happy, and, may I not say, do H.M. no harm."

Bute replied :

" Lord Bute presents his compliments to Mr Fox, and is glad to see his final determination taken. He has acquainted His Majesty with it in the manner he thought most likely to be of service to him. Lord Bute wishes Mr Fox would send the name of the barony he proposes to take to the Secretary of State. As to the latter part of his letter, he sees so little probability of the Privy Seal being open, when once the arrangement is made to fill it, that he can only say in general, whenever Mr Fox wishes to quit the office he now holds and points to any other, the essential services he has rendered His Majesty entitle him, in Lord Bute's opinion, to meet with the most gracious reception, and to have great attention paid to any request he shall make."

So the matter ended, and it only remained for Fox to choose his new name. " What title shall I take ? " he wrote to his wife, " Lord Holland of Kensington, I think, or will you have *Rivers* ? What supporters ? " ¹ And in another note to her later in the day, " I have done right, and am got to that ease I always wish'd for. Not with the grace I had a right to expect. But I am got there. I'll be Lord Holland, Baron of Foxley, Wiltshire, consequently called Lord Holland." His peerage dates from April 17 ; and two days later he took his seat in the House of Lords.²

Bute's resignation of the Treasury came as a general surprise to those who were ignorant of the political undercurrents. Grenville took his place, and dispossessed Dashwood of the Exchequer seals. Egremont and Halifax remained Secretaries of State. Great court was paid to

¹ April 12, 1763.

² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 79.

Bedford ; and his adherents reaped the benefit during the reconstruction of the Ministry. His Grace himself held aloof, offended by the slights which he conceived had been put upon him by Bute during the final peace negotiations. The post of plenipotentiary in Paris had, through Fox, been offered to and refused by Lord Waldegrave, on the very day before he sickened of a fatal attack of small-pox. Lord Hertford accepted the appointment, but much to his annoyance was saddled with Bunbury, as secretary. So frigid was the new Ambassador's attitude to Fox's brother-in-law, that the latter never took up the appointment, and pleaded the Government's necessity for his vote in the House of Commons as a reason for not leaving England.

CHAPTER XXIX

WITH his retirement to the House of Lords, Holland's political career may be said to have closed. Henceforward he took but little active part in public life. Parliament rose on April 19. The necessity for the new peer's daily attendance at the Pay Office had ceased with the advent of peace. The largest part of the work at the moment consisted in the collation of the accounts of sub-paymasters attached to the forces abroad—a matter of routine which could only be dealt with by the subordinate members of his staff. Holland was therefore at liberty to accompany his wife to Spa, where she had settled to go that summer in order to drink the waters. Their arrangements for the journey were set in order as expeditiously as possible; and after a short stay at Kingsgate, they crossed the Channel to Calais on May 11, accompanied by their two younger children.

The travellers were met at Ghent with the news that Stephen Fox was ill in Paris, and turned their steps thither from Brussels. Notwithstanding his unsatisfactory behaviour at Geneva on a previous occasion, Ste. had returned with his tutor to Dr Tronchin's care at the end of 1761 or the beginning of 1762. He was joined by George Macartney, a dashing young Irishman, who made a name for himself later in life as a politician and diplomatist. Macartney was some ten years his senior. He was intimate with the family, and was sent to the boy by Holland as a companion and mentor. Indeed, a guiding hand was very desirable in Ste.'s case. Expensive tastes were his undoing. He was abstaining from gam-

bling, it is true, in deference to a promise made to his father ; but his expenditure was out of all proportion to his tender years. " Though he has abandoned play," wrote Macartney, " his passion for clothes and horses is pretty nearly equivalent. He can't deny himself anything of that kind, and as he has not even the economy of extravagance, I fear, let his future fortune be ever so great, he will always be distressed in his circumstances." ¹ The truth of the warning Holland found to his cost, for on arrival in Paris he was presented with a list of drafts for the last eighteen months, amounting to nearly £7,000.²

The Hollands did not reach Spa till the middle of July, being obliged to remain for some weeks in Paris. They were accompanied on their journey by Ste. and Macartney. " I wish I had in England one bed as good as the worst we have met with," Holland wrote to Nicholl from the French capital. " They have not only been not bad, but excellent. That I suppose has contributed, as well as the change of air, etc., etc., to my sleeping as I do. And I am really in such a state of health and spirits as contents me, and if continu'd will afford as much satisfaction as *anni recedentes* can admit of." ³ Yet about this time a rumour of his death was sedulously spread abroad in London, to the consternation of his friends. For Holland was not forgotten in his absence ; and the series of abusive articles in a bundle of newspapers which he found awaiting him at Spa, gave him great annoyance. Among them were excerpts from Churchill's *Epistle to Hogarth*. The poet's virulent lines were " unanswerable," he wrote, " and must be borne." ⁴

At the end of August the family party broke up. The Hollands returned with Ste. and Henry to Paris; while Charles went back to England under Macartney's care.

¹ G. Macartney to H. Fox, December 16, 1762.

² It is only fair to the young man to state that this included the expenses of his tutor and servants.

³ May 29, 1763.

⁴ Holland to J. L. Nicholl, July 15, 1763.

Tradition relates that the foolish father had encouraged the boy of fourteen to amuse himself at the public gaming-tables ; and that his reception on his return to Eton was far from flattering. Masters and boys alike are said to have made his life a burden to him ; and we are told that Dr Barnard, the head master, greeted him with a flogging.¹ The story is probably an exaggeration, for we can read an account of the term in his own words. At least he realised the drawbacks of his prolonged holiday, and made up his mind not to repeat the mistake :

“ Tho’ I have made no very good verses since the holidays, I have not been idle ; as I have made some good themes, and studied a good deal in other parts of my business. And indeed I have taken some pains in verses, but from long disuse they do not come easy to me. Even now I am here,² I am not entirely idle ; I read Tully, and look over many speeches to speak when I return, which shall be as soon as Mr Hawkins says I can. I hope, when you come, you will be able to spare one Tuesday or Saturday to come to Eton to hear me speak. Dr Barnard thanked me for his snuff box, and said it was very much against his interest to advise me to be absent in the summer rather than now, as by that means the school lost so great an ornament at Election speeches. I cannot help saying that I find Eton more disagreeable than I imagined ; for which reason I think I am determined not to go to Paris at Xmas. My mother will be sorry to hear this. I wish, however, I could contrive a way to see Ste. I am so fully convinced of the use of being at Eton, that I am afraid of running the *risque* of not returning. I have also resolved to stay there till Xmas twelvemonth ; by this you may see the *petit maître de Paris* is converted into an Oxford pedant. I am satisfied you will not disapprove of this resolution, and I hope therefore you will not endeavour to dissuade me from it, as I am convinced you will willingly consent

¹ *Memorials and Correspondence of Fox*, i. 12.

² He had been unwell, and had gone to Holland House to consult Hawkins, the celebrated surgeon.

to spend six weeks less agreeably, to make me a much better scholar than I should otherwise be, which is a glory you know I very much desire." ¹

During his stay in Paris Lord Holland was received by Louis XV. The French King's habitual *gaucherie* and tactlessness with strangers was well instanced during their conversation. "Vous avez fait bien du bruit dans votre pays, n'est-ce pas?" said he to the Englishman, who aptly turned aside the innuendo. "Sire, je fais tout mon possible pour le faire cesser." ² Holland's reputation stood high in France; and he and his wife were welcomed and fêted. David Hume relates that the Parisians concluded that an Englishman of his reputation was naturally a philosopher and must be admired. It was customary for him to doze after dinner, and one day at a great entertainment he happened to fall asleep. "Le voilà," said a marquis, pulling his neighbour by the sleeve, "le voilà qui pense." ³

In September, when his holiday was drawing to a close, the Hollands went to the Richmonds at Aubigny, the Duchess of Portsmouth's *château*, which Holland had once visited so many years before. There they spent several weeks "in a fine country and a fine climate, and in the midst of a most extensive *seigneurie*." ⁴

On November 1, Holland left Paris for England, in order to be in his place in the House of Lords when Parliament met. He had promised Lord Sandwich that

¹ C. J. Fox to Holland, October 18, 1763. Sir George Trevelyan relates that Charles passed the subsequent year at Eton "with more advantage to himself than to the school," and that he "produced a visible and durable change for the worse in the morals and habits of the place" (*Early History of Charles James Fox*, p. 48). Does he not allow his prejudice against the "golden youth" of the age to carry him too far? Shelburne, the sole authority whom he quotes, wrote years later, and was at best a prejudiced witness.

² Walpole's *Letters*, v. 367.

³ *Letters of David Hume* (G. Birkbeck Hill), p. 53.

⁴ Holland to G. Selwyn, October 5, 1763 (*Jesse's G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, i. 267).

he would not fail to be back in time. Though Fox and Sandwich were both followers of Cumberland, their relations, previous to the rupture with their patron, had been cordial but never intimate. Fox was thirteen years the elder, and had little in common with the dissolute leader of the "Hell Fire Club," whose orgies at Medmenham Abbey were the scandal of the country-side. Yet Sandwich had his good points. He had proved himself an excellent administrator in various capacities; and held the Admiralty for some months after Grenville's acceptance of the Treasury, until Lord Egremont's sudden death, on August 21, gave him the vacant Secretaryship.

The new Ministry had its troubles to face, before Grenville had even time to feel his seat in the saddle. The 45th number of the *North Briton*, an audacious periodical, which owed its inception to John Wilkes, the member for Aylesbury, aided by the scurrilous pen of Charles Churchill, contained a direct attack on King George, through the medium of his ministers. Wilkes was arrested upon a general warrant. He was imprisoned in the Tower, but shortly afterwards regained his liberty by pleading his privileges as a member of the House of Commons. So puffed up was he by this victory, that he commenced an action against the Secretaries of State; but before the case came into court Lord Egremont was dead.

Short as had been the time, the King and Bute, who remained at his right hand, had already discovered that the Triumvirate, the name by which Grenville, Egremont and Halifax were commonly known, were not to be dictated to, and were launching out into a policy of their own. To counteract this unwelcome show of independence, the court tried to persuade Hardwicke and Newcastle to return to office. The attempt proved fruitless; and led to a strongly worded protest from Grenville, and a demand that Bute should be removed from the King's counsels. Egremont's death brought forward Bedford, who had by this time completely broken with Bute. He

seems to have schemed to take advantage of the rift between the court and the ministers for the ultimate benefit of his own party. To this end he urged the King to send for his former minister, Pitt, thinking to overcome his reluctance to act with him. Bute could do nothing under the circumstances but concur: indeed, he began to prefer Pitt, to all others, at the head of affairs, for he had at least received fair treatment at his hands. And so sent for Pitt was, again unbeknown to Grenville. The first interview, on August 27, gave promise of an accommodation. But at a second, two days later, the King drew back. He was prepared to receive Temple, but not the whole cohort of Whigs whom Pitt proposed to introduce into the Ministry; and under Bute's advice he broke off the negotiation.¹

Pitt was probably resolved in his own mind to proscribe many of those who had been responsible for the peace, though he professed to accept what had been done and to let bygones be bygones.² Lords Holland and Mansfield were among those whose names were specially singled out for harsh treatment. Bedford and his followers were said also to be on the black list.³ The evidence on this point is contradictory, but in any case the King made skilful use of the report, and through Sandwich induced the little Duke, out of sheer pique, to accept office as Lord President and nominal head of the Administration. Shelburne took the opportunity of the failure of the

¹ Sandwich to Holland, September 26, 1763. "On the Sunday, Ld Bute, who in every transaction has been guided solely by his fears, was intimidated from proceeding upon so hot-headed a plan, and by which so many people of great consequence and so many bodies of men were set at defiance (for not only the D. of Bedford and all those who had been in any way concerned in the peace, but the Tories and all but men of *Revolution principles* were proscribed), that he thought he was not safe upon such a foundation; the consequence of which was that we knew on Sunday night that Mr Pitt's terms would be refused, when he returned (as he and his friends thought) to reap the fruits of victory on the Monday."

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 290.

³ Sandwich to Holland, September 6, 1763.

negotiations with Pitt to attach himself to him, resigning the Board of Trade. Lord Hillsborough succeeded him in what Holland termed "the most important place in England." As the duties of the office included the control of the Colonies, the events of the next twenty years show all too truly the correctness of his prognostication.

Holland's letters to his correspondents in England at this time demonstrate his profound interest in the political situation. He was agog to know who could have advised the King to send for Pitt. He felt sure that Shelburne and Calcraft had a finger in the pie, for the latter had often recommended this expedient to him.¹ "But surely," he wrote, "these could not bring about such a measure without the acquiescence at least of those who of all mankind should least have acquiesced in it."² He had never, however, been able to unravel to his own satisfaction the tangled skein of Bute's aims and actions. "Oh! Lord Bute! Lord Bute!" he broke out in a letter to Welbore Ellis at this time,³ "*caput horum et causa malorum*. He told me in February that the Triumvirate (and I find it was true) were his enemies and joined in league against him. And then gave the Ministry into their hands. He would have been always abus'd, but

¹ The truth of Holland's conviction is proved by an extract from Shelburne's memorandum book (Lansdowne MSS.).

"J[ohn] C[alcraft] came to town Monday the 8th. Saw E. Gower and Mr Rigby the 9th. In consequence R—y went to the D. of B[edford] the 10th; saw his Grace at Woodstock the 11. Returned the 12. J. C. went that night at their desire to Hayes, but Mr P[itt] being at the D. of Bolton's, not returning till the 14th, Mr C. did not see him till the 15. In consequence of Mr P. appointment on Saturday the 13, J. C. received a letter from E. Temple in answer to one he wrote the 10th. J. C. returned from Hayes with the report of Mr P.'s conversation and refusal to come, if the D. B. had the T[reasur]y; which he first communicated in part to E. G[ower] and Mr R—y, then in full to E. S[helburne], who that same evening did so to E. Bute."

² Holland to J. L. Nicholl, September 7, 1763. Lord Bute is indicated.

³ September 14, 1763.

he had got the better, and there was no way that he could have lost the game but by flinging up the cards. If indeed he had lost the K., if as Lord Granville said to me, 'He was loose in the haft.' But that was not the case, and even then it was ill-manag'd; and a strange spot of work he made of it for the King and for himself."

His home correspondents soon enabled Holland to elucidate the puzzle. His deeply rooted animosity to Pitt peeps out in his replies. "When I heard Pitt had been with the King, I knew his demands were, however he should word them, crown or sceptre," he wrote to Ellis. And to Nicholl¹:

"The D. of Bedford I just now hear is President. It is God's mercy that Mr Pitt affronted him. I think in this strange transaction I see the nature of both the men. To my knowledge, Shelburne, thro' Wood and Calcraft and Rigby, etc., had, before I left London, laid the plan to wield the D. of Bedford's power next winter to the destruction of the present Ministry and the aggrandising at the same time themselves. His Grace, who never knows what he is himself to do, came to town by chance, and sprung the mine too soon. This is my opinion. Then Mr Pitt, who is above all common sense, who might have had the D. of Bedford *cum suis*, on one side the most innocent and on the other the most obsequious of his subjects, and at the same time an agreeable acquisition to the Ds of Cumberland, Devonshire and Newcastle, proscribes them."

Even in far-away Paris the old war-horse was pawing the ground and champing his bit at the thought of a possible return to the fray.

"If this Administration is to go on, as I hear it is intended, they ought to find ev'ry means to inculcate in the minds of men a belief of inflexible steadiness for the future. Not an easy matter. I perhaps should think that the sending for me, and declaring me of their most

¹ September 14, 1763.

intimate and confidential councils, might be as good a step towards it as any they could take. But it is the King and they should think so, not I. And my coming would look plainly as a soliciting what I neither do nor ought to wish, and perhaps should not succeed in if I did. I ask myself, if I did come; what should I say? I answer I could only tell H.M. that though I should have been sorry to have been contriv'd or whisper'd out of employment, yet now that it might be of great use to His Majesty in new arrangements, I desir'd to part with it at Xmas; and should not only preserve as much duty but as much good humour and zeal for H.M.'s service as the best employment could inspire me with. That if he thought my attendance on his Council, in or out of a Cabt employment (not Secry or Try), would be for his service, I would attend."¹

But the impulse was only momentary. He expressed his intention of remaining abroad until a week before the meeting of Parliament. "There is a risk of ridicule," he wrote, "in fancying oneself of consequence when one is thought, and indeed is of none." Yet it was never Holland's habit to conceal his good impulses. Therefore he commissioned both Ellis and Sandwich to inform the King of his willingness to come forward, should his services again be required, and to tell Grenville of his intention to support the Government.

"I hope I am not doubted, but ev'rybody is bely'd, and I have seldom had a word of truth said of me. Wherefore it is highly proper that H.M. should be assur'd of my ready, zealous and constant assistance. His ease, happiness and dignity are at stake; and he and England are undone if, which God avert, his cause should fail. However H.M. (and I fear he has great reason for it) may slight professions, I think he must know you to be an honest man, and will believe those you make to him from me, and therefore I desire you to make them in my name and in the strongest manner. My power is

¹ Holland to J. L. Nicholl, September 7.

not much, and for me personally it is well it is not : for whatever it is, H.M. may command the exertion of it, tho' death were to be the certain consequence." ¹

His advances were outwardly well received ; and Sandwich was ordered to convey His Majesty's thanks for the message.²

The further question of Holland's retirement from the Pay Office remained undecided. His accounts were still the crux of the situation. The system which seems to have obtained there was unbusiness-like and complicated. Government money, his own and that of Mr Powell, whom he had appointed to a chief clerkship in the office, had for the moment been allowed to accumulate in almost inextricable confusion. In Holland's case very large sums were involved, as his own account of his financial *coups* during the autumn of 1762 shews.

"The sudden and great rise of stocks has made me richer than ever I intended or desir'd to be. Obloquy generally attends money so got, but with how much reason in all cases let this simple account of my gains show. The Government borrows money at 20 per cent. disct. I am not consulted or concern'd in making the bargain. I have, as Paymaster, great sums in my hands, which, not applicable to any present use, must either lye dead in the bk, or be employ'd by me. I lend this to the Government in 1761. A peace is thought certain. I am not in the least consulted, but my very bad opinion of Mr Pitt makes me think it will not be concluded. I sell out, and gain greatly. In 1762, I lend again ; a peace comes, in which again I am not consulted, and I again gain greatly. If anybody should say that I advis'd a peace, let it be consider'd that that was in November

¹ Holland to W. Ellis, September 13, 1763.

² Sandwich to Holland, September 26. The King had parted with Holland on good terms, and had recently told Lady Holland that he would never forget her husband's conduct during the previous winter. Nevertheless, only a month before, in conversation with Pitt, he had proposed to give the Pay Office to Grenville ! (Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 292.)

last. I had no money in the funds then, and indeed thought my advice would not be taken, nor was it, but on the contrary a declaration of war with Spain follow'd." ¹

Before leaving for France, Holland gave instructions that these various accounts must be separated out and put in order as quickly as possible. He desired to settle up the whole and pay off the arrears—a subject on which the newspapers kept up a stream of malevolent comment—before he vacated the office. But in practice this was impossible. The sub-paymasters had first to produce their tallies and the War Office and Treasury to bring in their reckonings. So at the end of August we find Holland still urging Ellis, the new Secretary-at-War, to hurry on his subordinates.² "Move heaven and earth," he wrote to Nicholl on the same day, "to get them paid, which is the best answer, and don't trust to the truth, which is that I am not to blame."³ The date of his resignation depended, therefore, on the progress of these accounts. His intention towards the end of October certainly was to quit at the end of the year. But a fortnight later Nicholl began to express doubts whether the settlement could be expected as soon as he had anticipated. Holland therefore clung to his post.

He was outspoken on the subject of Bute's retirement from the court—a condition insisted upon both by Grenville and Bedford.⁴ "Will nobody," he wrote to Sandwich,⁵ "tell the King, or the King himself never reflect, that to banish Lord Bute is an infringement on H.M.'s liberty, an injury to his honour, and a violence perhaps as great as what has been offer'd by Mr Pitt?" He

¹ Fox's *Memoir*, p. 72.

² Holland to W. Ellis, August 29, 1763.

³ Holland to J. L. Nicholl, October 2, 1763.

⁴ Sandwich stated that Bute withdrew voluntarily (Sandwich to Holland, September 26). Perhaps he only forestalled a necessity which he saw approaching.

⁵ Holland to Sandwich [early in October 1763]. Docketed, "Thoughts on Lord Bute at court."

implored Sandwich to use his influence with his colleagues and with the King to get the favourite retained, as the best chance of holding the Government together; and even offered, if necessary, to broach the subject himself to His Majesty. His sentiments may have been repeated to Bute; for about this time a "very intimate acquaintance" of the latter sounded Macartney upon the possibility of Holland again taking the lead in administration. He asked whether he would be tempted by an earldom; and hinted that Holland would have long ago been a viscount, had not Bute been afraid to press the King "in a point of that kind where he has such singular notions."¹ Macartney answered that he believed Holland would take the offer kindly, but that, after what had passed, he was sure that he would never ask it. Of Holland's political intentions he expressed his complete ignorance.²

Holland arrived in London on November 7. "Be assur'd," he wrote from Calais to his wife, who had remained in Paris, "I will not meddle so as to engage in politics, and my only point shall be to get back to you. . . . Oh dear! Oh dear! I go with a heavy heart, and repeat that after this, no separation but death shall be longer from you than a week or so."³

On the 9th, he went to court, and was received in the closet "as this time twelve months." "Really pleas'd to hear Calcraft and Ld Shelburne talk'd of as I talk of

¹ G. Macartney to Holland, October 14, 1763; C. J. Fox to Holland, October 18, 1763. These letters convince us that Holland made no attempt to obtain an earldom at the time when he received his barony. Certainly there is no reference to any such request in the correspondence. Walpole, it is true, makes a definite allusion to Fox's disappointment, in a letter to Mann (April 30, 1763, *Letters*, v. 312); and the third Lord Holland seems to take for granted that his grandfather applied for it (Fox's *Memoir*, p. 78). It seems probable, however, that the latter has mistaken the occasion of the request.

² There are no means of determining how far this enquiry was really authorised by Bute. Nothing further seems to have come of it.

³ November 4, 1763.

them.”¹ Later in the day he called on Grenville. “No professions on either side, further than general words from Lord Holland of his intentions to support Government.”² In the course of their conversation Wilkes’s name came up, and Bedford’s recent civilities to him in Paris, at the instance of Rigby, were discussed. Holland himself had taken a different line. He had refused to see Wilkes when he called, and had neglected to return his visit. He seems to have agreed with the Government regarding the policy which was to be pursued towards him at the commencement of the session.³ Yet Wilkes’s original contention in the offending number of the *North Briton*—that the words of the King’s speech were in reality those of the ministers, and were therefore open to attack—had been laid down by Fox in the plainest terms on the occasion of his rescue of Barré from Pitt’s invective in December 1761.⁴ Holland’s feeling towards Wilkes was one of personal resentment for the abuse which had been heaped upon him, but he recognised to the full his fatal gift of attraction. “I know nobody more likely for Ste. to like, and who would do him more harm,” he wrote to his wife, when Wilkes had again retired to Paris in December, after his duel with Samuel Martin. “I don’t speak this on account of politics, tho’ for that reason I should dislike it. But he has wit, humour, jollity, with profligacy of ev’ry sort in a supreme degree. Pray, my dear, warn Ste., and prevent his making any acquaintance with him.”⁵

As Charles had chosen to remain in England for the Christmas holidays, the fond parent elected to stay with him until his return to Eton. Holland had rushed off to

¹ Holland to Lady Holland, November 11, 1763.

² *Grenville Papers*, ii. 220.

³ Sandwich to Holland, September 26.

⁴ See *ante*, ii. 158.

⁵ December 26, 1763. Holland had reason to believe that Wilkes was intimate with Mr Foley, the Paris banker, and that he had recently left his daughter in his care. Ste. was friendly with the Foleys, and later on lodged in their house.

the school a few days after his arrival in England in order to hear the boy speak ; and brought him back to London with him. The young prodigy spent a whole week in town, in the course of which he attended three debates in the Commons, and one in the House of Lords. " I am come home," Holland wrote to his wife, on the evening of the meeting of Parliament ; " it is eight at night, and Charles will hardly come from the H. of Commons before I am in bed."

At the end of the year, Holland inferred that his political situation was just what Lady Holland would wish it ; and remarked that a request to be allowed to return to France had been most readily consented to by ministers and by the King.¹ He set out, therefore, at the end of January, to rejoin his wife, without seeing Lord Bute. The latter had left London before Holland's arrival ; had requested him not to call on him in the country owing to the delicacy of his situation ;² and did not return to town until March. He was reported to be intending to come up for the meeting of Parliament, and for the marriage of the King's sister, Princess Augusta, to the Hereditary-Prince of Brunswick. But he did not put in an appearance at either ceremony.

Soon after the Christmas recess, Sir John Phillips carried a resolution reappointing the Committee constituted for the purpose of inspecting the Public Accounts.³ Holland was stimulated to fresh efforts to clear up his position. " I am sorry," he wrote to Nicholl from Paris on February 19, " if the Committee gives you any more trouble ; you have but too much. But I hope it may be avoided, as far as it regards you, and pray let no expense be spar'd to get able and sufficient hands to answer all their questions as fast as they may ask. . . . The publick ought to wish, as much as you or I do, to see my accounts closed.

¹ Holland to Lady Holland, January 3, 1764.

² Bute to Holland, November 17, 1763.

³ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 355.

I wish nothing may obstruct it, and again beg you to spare no expense in clerks for that purpose."

On January 25, the day of Phillips's motion, Sir John Glynn brought forward the question of a reconsideration of the Marriage Act. He was supported by Holland's friends, who expressed themselves in favour of repealing the Act.¹ The same day, Holland took leave of Grenville, and had a long conversation with him. The Minister had recently assisted him, at Bute's request, with a pension of £300 a year from the Privy Purse for Dr Francis.²

Francis was one of those truculent individuals, whose propensity for grumbling rapidly degenerates into ingratitude. Holland had invariably treated him well, and never missed an opportunity of trying to obtain preferment for him. But two livings and a chaplaincy were insufficient to satisfy the Doctor's dreams of avarice. He maintained that services rendered by teaching the members of the Fox family to read and declaim, and by writing to order in the public press, had received inadequate recompense. In this view he was supported at a later date by his son, the more celebrated Sir Philip Francis, who was himself indebted to Holland for his start in life in the Secretary of State's office, and later for "a place of £1,000 a year" at the War Office.³ So low did Dr Francis sink that he became reconciled to Churchill, who had attacked him unmercifully in his

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, i. 359.

² *Grenville Papers*, ii. 250.

³ Merivale's *Memoirs of Sir P. Francis*, i. 361. Sir Philip Francis's account of the King's affair with Lady Sarah Lennox, written in 1776 or 1777, so grossly misrepresents the facts, that we hesitate to give that credit to his remarks about Lord Holland to which they would otherwise be entitled.

His biographer claims that his appointment as first clerk at the War Office was given him by Ellis through the good offices of Robert Wood, Pitt's under-Secretary from 1758 to 1763. Dr Francis, however, allowed to Macartney that Holland had obtained the post for his son. (Sir J. Macartney to Holland, October 14, 1763.)

earlier compositions, and handed over to him his correspondence with Holland to be used against his late patron. The letters were found among the poet's papers, after his death in November 1764.¹

Francis complained that he alone of all Holland's friends was neglected and forgotten.² His real grievance apparently was the fact that Holland had not been able to procure him an Irish Bishopric. He was jealous of Holland's illegitimate daughter's husband,³ Dr Edward Young, who had just become Bishop of Dromore through Lord Northumberland's good offices. Ever ready to serve a friend, Holland tried to turn away his wrath by soft words. "I am sincerely yours," he wrote, "nor shall one passionate, I had almost said desperate, letter, make me cease to love you." He offered to pay his debts, to buy him a living when a suitable one fell vacant; and later procured him the chaplaincy of Chelsea Hospital. "I beg you would recommend him in my name," were his words to the Secretary-at-War. "It was a promise, and must not be broken, tho' all correspondence between us is for ever."⁴

Fresh reports were circulated during Holland's absence that he was immediately resigning his post. These he flatly contradicted. "I have not had a hint directly or indirectly about my place. So that these rumours spring from those who wish me remov'd, and not from those who can remove me. I shall last, I suppose, therefore, till Xmas."⁵

The months had passed pleasantly enough in Paris.

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 36.

² Sir G. Macartney to Holland, October 14.

³ Fox had two illegitimate children, whose mother he writes of as "Ally." She married a joiner named Walker in October 1745 (P. Bertrand to H. Fox, October 7; November 9, 1745). The son, Charles Cooper, held a lieutenancy in the Coldstream Guards at this time, and subsequently became Comptroller of Chelsea Hospital.

⁴ Holland to W. Ellis, September 14, 1763.

⁵ Holland to J. L. Nicholl, April 15, 1764.

" I have two sons here. The eldest bids fair for being as universally and as much belov'd as ever I was hated. The rest of my family, too, are ev'rything I could wish them. Thus happy in private life, am I not in the right to leave the publick ? " ¹

But a few days before the date fixed for the family's departure for England, Holland's contentment received a rude shock. He was overwhelmed with the news of the elopement of his favourite niece with William O'Brien, a penniless actor. Lady Susan Fox-Strangways had met the good-looking Irishman at the annual theatricals at Holland House. They had taken a fancy to one another, and took advantage of her sittings to Miss Read, the pastellist, during the spring, to arrange secret meetings. The fact got round to her father's ears. Lord Ilchester insisted that the intimacy must be broken off. The young lady seemed to assent, but begged for one last interview. Four days later she came of age. Next day, she made breakfast with Lady Sarah Bunbury before an appointment with Miss Read the excuse to get out of the house. Once in the street she whipped off in a hackney carriage to be married to O'Brien at Covent Garden church ; and accompanied him to his villa at Dunstable. The family were in consternation. It is true that the young man was sprung from a reputable stock, but his profession was an insuperable objection. " Even a footman were preferable," wrote Horace Walpole.

Lord Ilchester was as one distraught. He announced his intention of never seeing his " ungrateful daughter " again. He implored his brother neither to visit nor to correspond with her. " She must now pass the remainder of her unhappy life within the precincts of Drury Lane and with the company she finds there." But her uncle felt more compassion for her than anger. He could look back upon his own feelings under similar circumstances.

¹ Holland to J. Campbell, March 24, 1764.

"Alas!" he wrote, "there never was a heart more form'd than her's to feel exquisitely ev'ry circumstance of that misery which she has knowingly flung herself into."¹ He busied himself with schemes for alleviating her unfortunate situation.

"I have not seen her, but propose to see her Thursday, which will not be of the least use. But I am told if I don't, that she will be very unhappy. I must not, I need not add to the misery she has brought upon herself. But at present, they say she looks well and is happy. It must be in their thoughts that something is contriving by us for her; for I am told they have hardly a guinea left."

Holland gave her an annuity of £400 for three years out of his own pocket.² He looked about for honourable employment for O'Brien abroad. First, a consulship at Cadiz was thought of; next, a post in the East Indies. Finally, America was chosen as their place of residence; and steps were taken to obtain a grant of land for them. The O'Briens sailed for New York in the middle of September, and did not return to England until 1770.

Lady Ilchester's forgiveness was not long withheld; but the young lady's father was more stubborn.³ He refused to condone her offence for several years, and was then only won over by the entreaties of his brother.

Holland passed most of the summer at Kingsgate, which he termed "another name for Paradise." "The air of gaiety that breathes in every line of your letter, shows me how much you enjoy yourself at Kingsgate,"

¹ Holland to J. L. Nicholl, April 15.

² Holland to Ilchester, June 5, 1764.

³ *Lady Sarah Lennox*, i. 218.

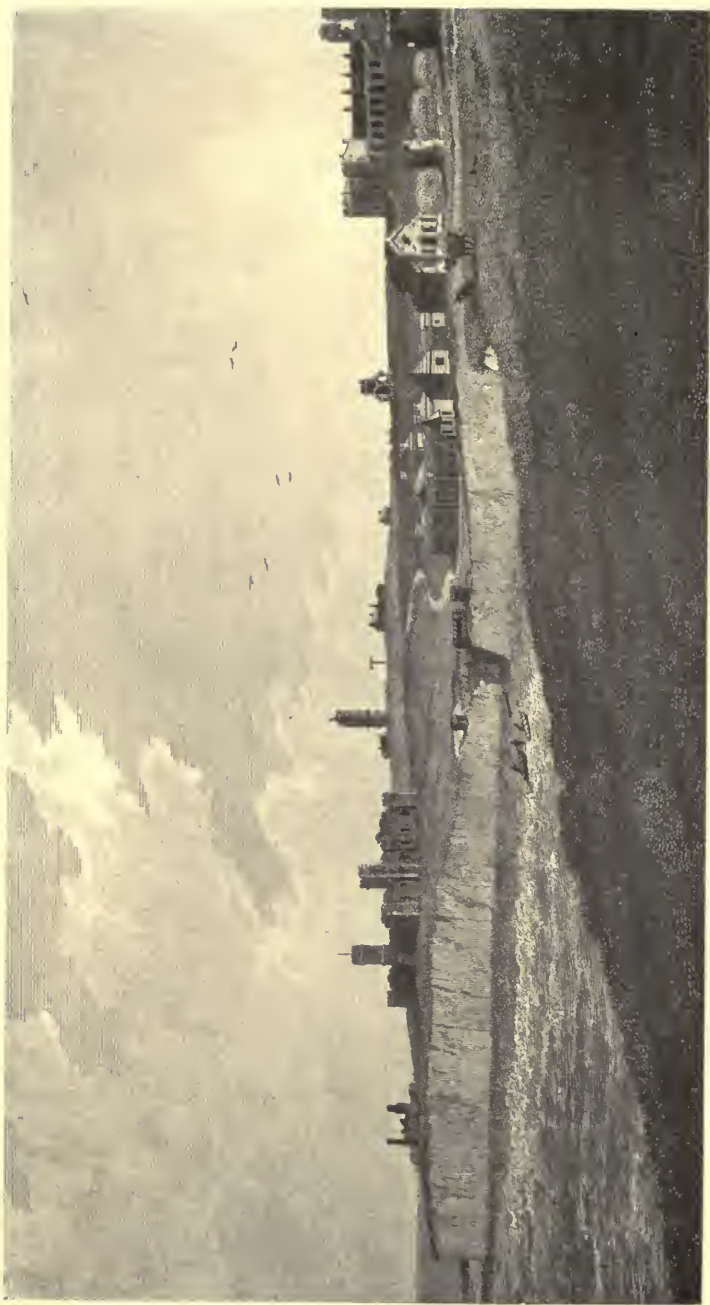
⁴ "Lord and Lady Ilchester are much better than I expected, and become so by very different means. The first by never speaking of Lady Susan, the other by talking of nothing else (where she can mention her, that is), and with great fondness" (Holland to Lady Hervey, September 30, 1764).

wrote Macartney in August, soon after he had received the Ambassadorship in St Petersburg through Holland's influence with Sandwich. Bit by bit he added to the property. He had laid out the demesne as a permanent residence for his favourite son, little realising how soon those acres would pass into the market, and those *objets d'art*, on the collection of which he was expending so much care.¹ For the moment, however, he was at liberty to give the fullest scope to his imagination. At that time the promontory of the North Foreland afforded scant attraction to the traveller, and Holland had that remote corner of Kent completely to himself.

The spot which he specially set himself to reclaim was a fold in the ground situated half a mile to the north of that uncompromising headland. When first he took over the property, a tiny house was standing at the head of the narrow gorge or funnel leading between two chalk cliffs to a rocky beach some forty feet below. A chance landing of Charles II and his brother, the Duke of York, had given a name to the locality. Many years ago this nook had been the reputed haunt of smugglers, till a rampart and portcullis were erected to curb their nefarious activities. These defences had long ago been swept away, but the very fact of their existence put original ideas into the head of the new owner. The fact, too, that the heights overlooking the southern side of the bay were said to have been the scene of a battle between the Danes and the Saxons nine hundred years before, gave further scope for his fantastical conceptions.

His first care was to improve his dwelling, which he describes as little more than thirty yards from the sea. Tully's "Formian Villa" was said to have been his model. In any case, a lofty Doric portico of twelve columns of Portland stone was the chief feature of the house. Notwithstanding this outward show of magnificence, Holland

¹ The property was bought from Charles Fox by Mr Powell, Holland's friend and executor, and remained in his family for many years.



NORTH VIEW OF KINGSGATE.

By B. T. Pouncy.

and his wife were minded to limit the size of their residence. The remains of a conventual building, some three hundred yards inland, served to supplement the accommodation for their household and guests, and to this the master decided to add arches giving the effect of a cloister.¹ Then he must needs manufacture a ruined castle on the heights of Hackendown out of another derelict edifice given him by Lord Hillsborough,² and proceeded to put up other tumbledown erections of flint and mortar at various points of vantage on the coast. "The Castle" had at least the merit of utility, for it sheltered his stables, which were attached to it. An arched gateway in front of the house, to reproduce the ancient defences guarding the approach to the beach, gave him and his advisers much cause for thought. And when no further opportunity for the erection of similar oddities remained, the old man took to building miniature towers. The first to spring up was one on the "parade"—the cliffs to the north of the bay. Next, "Hackendown Banks," two *tumuli* containing skulls and bones, as Holland's excavations had proved, were chosen for the site of another column; and in the inscription on it which commemorates the battle, we read the name of the originator of the monument as "Hen. de Holland"! Finally, in 1768, appeared the tower in honour of Harley, the anti-Wilkes Lord Mayor of London, to which further allusion will be made in due course.³

In the initiation of the schemes for these strange conceits Holland was ably seconded by Mr Nicholl. John Vardy was his professional adviser, in conjunction with Mr Thomas Wynne, afterwards Lord Newborough, who carried on the work alone after the former's death in May 1765. Robert Adam seems to have been called in

¹ R. Whitfield to Holland, June 2, 1766. Whitfield is said to have sold the property to Holland. The latter certainly employed him as his builder, and subsequently as his agent for the property.

² Holland to J. L. Nicholl, August 24, 1762.

³ See p. 327

by Mr Nicholl during the Hollands' absence in Italy in 1767, but his plans were conceived on too large a scale and found little favour in their eyes.¹ Wynne's amateurish but more homely "uprights" were in the end preferred to those of the celebrated architect.²

Of the rooms and decorations to which Holland devoted so much time and attention little or nothing remains. The house on the sea-shore fell into disrepair, and within the last fifty years has been completely renovated. A metal balcony at a first-floor window alone survives to tell its tale. Most of the real antiques—the statues and objects of vertu, collected in Italy with the help of Sir Horace Mann, and put ashore at Holland's own landing-stage, went the way of all Charles Fox's most treasured possessions. A high-road now divides from the sea the terrace, where stood the row of cannons, in which Holland took so much pride. Two stone lions, of gigantic proportions, watch over the gay throngs of Margate. The gateway, with its cyphers and coats of arms designed to remind the passing guest of the visit of King Charles, the chate-laine's great-grandfather, has been transported bodily to "the Convent" garden, and is re-erected near the mounds. Even the arches there have disappeared, and are now reproduced in concrete. "The Castle" has been merged in the castellated mansion which crowns the edge of the down. The "Arx Ruochim" and the "Countess Fort" no longer dominate the coast with their guns; nor does the Temple of Neptune give shelter to a statue of that deity. Our knowledge of them is confined to Basire's interesting series of engravings. The various towers indeed remain, and here and there a gothic window or a pointed arch still peep out from the remains of flint walls or piles of ruins. But of the relics which survive, the little inn, which perches hard by

¹ Holland to J. L. Nicholl, March 25, 1767.

² A sketch from Adam's pen for a ceiling for Lady Holland's bedroom is in the collection at Sir John Soane's Museum.

the cliff, gives us the closest link with those days long past when Charles Fox played cricket in a meadow near at hand, or followed partridges across his father's farms; and when Lady Sarah Bunbury was wont to trip lightly down the path to the sea, to ponder perchance on the match she might have made, and to set it against the unsatisfactory realities of life with Sir Charles. The sign is that of "The Captain Digby," a name recalling to mind Holland's favourite sailor nephew, Robert Digby, to whom continual reference is made in the family annals under the sobriquet of "the Noble Captain."

Allowing for his ailments, Holland was as happy as he could be during the summer of 1764.

"Time glides smoothly and gently and pleasantly away, and what more can I expect? But more may be desir'd, and perhaps I am harder to wean from youth and youthful satisfactions than most people are; and then life, such as it is, how long is it to last? It is vexation of spirit, so soon passeth it away and it is gone. Here is a strange mixture of love, and of dislike, of life; but such as it is, it is a true picture, this morning, of the mind of yours, etc."¹

And to Lady Hervey he wrote two months later:

"I am going down hill, and have found here the gentlest, surest path to descend by, that almost disguises the descent. For I don't like growing old, but will take all the care I can not to trouble anybody with so fruitless and so reasonable a complaint."

But not content with gratifying his fancy for building at Kingsgate, Holland must needs buy a hunting-box in the country for Ste. His choice fell on Winterslow, a property adjoining Farley, the old family estate near Salisbury, where his parents were laid to rest. His son seems to have revised his youthful predilection for

¹ Holland to W. Ellis, July 20, 1764

town life. He spent that summer in England, but in the autumn was abroad again, alternating between Spa and Paris. We have seen how Holland's solicitude for his children's health overcame every other consideration. But he was under no delusion about his eldest-born. "Though I lived with no view but to have some interest with him," he wrote, "I don't love to think of it."¹ Ste.'s passion for play was steadily on the increase. He could not even trust himself to abstain from cards and dice, if the temptation was thrown in his way²; and in the spring of 1765 we hear of him being extricated with difficulty from the clutches of a firm of Anglophobe bankers in Paris, whose reputation was more than doubtful.³ As usual, the prodigal professed penitence. But he had too good an opinion of himself to remain long downcast.

"I am arrived at that degree of happiness to be sure of a supper every night in good French company, and a dinner too, if I chuse it, but that I seldom do, for *ce n'est pas le bon ton de dîner*. . . . I have been so much in company and at so many great suppers at Fontainebleau that I find I have entirely got rid of my *mauvaise honte*, and am as easy with thirty people I never saw as with two or three friends; and by so much practice I do think I talk French very near as well as a Frenchman. Everybody says I have no accent at all. In short, I am here *un jeune anglais qui voit de la très bonne compagnie*."⁴

The complaint was infectious, and Charles was unfortunately developing a similar *penchant* for high play.⁵ He had left Eton in the summer of 1764, and in October we find his name entered on the books of Hertford College, Oxford. His explanation to his father of how he had accounted for a draft of £150, when starting to take up his abode there, was good reading enough:

¹ Holland to Lady Holland, May 6, 1765.

² April 1764.

³ C. Upton to Holland, May 7, 1765.

⁴ S. Fox to Holland, November 26, 1764.

⁵ Sir G. Macartney to Holland, May 14, 1765.

“ I owed Mr Fannen for what he had paid to Mrs Milward for me, £37 18/- ; and the tailor £13 for debts contracted before I left Eton. So far, I own, is extravagance. These two debts alone reduce the £150 I drew for to £100. Now there is a great deal I have spent since I left Eton which was absolutely necessary. I have had a great many new shirts, &c., new stockings, one new frock, which reduced the £100 to little more than £60. Now I was told one must have some spoons at Oxford. I had six made, which came to about £7. This reduced it to £53. There are many other trifles which have reduced it at last to £34 11/-, which is all I have left. You will easily perceive that I shall soon want more, as I believe I have something to pay for putting up paper in my room at Oxford and other things of that sort, but Mr Newcome tells me that whatever I lay out upon my room at Oxford, I shall have two-thirds of it repaid by my successor. I forgot to mention my journey from Kingsgate hither, which helped not a little to reduce.”¹

But his next letter, a fortnight later, was less satisfactory.

“ I cannot express how much ashamed I am to write to you on this occasion, but as I know there is nothing which you desire more than that we should place confidence in you, I am induced to write to you, to tell you that since my arrival here I have been so foolish as to break all the good resolutions I had formed in regard to play, and have lost upwards of eighty guineas. I told you in my last that I had but £34 left. The expenses of entering come to £20, and several things besides which I had to pay for when I came thither, have almost consumed the remaining £14 ; so that with what I owed to my servant, I have no money left, and owe eighty guineas. I fear my imprudence will lessen your good opinion of me and justly ; but I think I can answer for myself for the future, as I have made a most fixed resolution never again to play. I think I shall have courage to keep it,

¹ C. J. Fox to Holland, October 13, 1764.

but cannot be sure enough of my strength to give an absolute *promise*.”¹

Hertford College was at that time under the care of Dr Newcome, who in later years became Primate of Ireland. His rule was not harsh, but no compulsion was necessary to keep Charles at his desk. “Application like yours,” wrote his tutor, “requires some intermission, and you are the only person with whom I have ever had connection, to whom I could say this.”² Charles took up the study of mathematics with zest, and on Macartney’s advice turned his attention to the French language.³ Nor were his classical studies neglected. He insisted on a second year at the University, and spent the long vacation of 1765 hard at work.

Yet all his time was by no means spent in the improvement of his mind. He managed to pass May and June with his mother in Paris; while his fellow pupils were awaiting his return, to continue their course in certain branches of mathematics which he did not wish to miss! His brother, his aunts, Lady Sarah and Lady Louisa Conolly, and Mr Clotworthy Upton,⁴ made up the party in Paris. During his stay he was introduced to David Hume, who had become secretary to Lord Hertford. The historian, we learn, conceived a great admiration for his talents.

“David is extremely surpriz’d at his knowledge, force of mind, and manly way of thinking at his age. At the same time he has insinuated his fears to me, that the dissipation of this kind of Parisian life might check his ardor after useful knowledge, and lose in all appearance a very great acquisition to the publick. I told Charles this conversation between me and Hume, and that I was obliged to own that the risk would be very great, 99

¹ C. J. Fox to Holland, October 24, 1764.

² *Memorials and Corres. of C. J. Fox*, i, 22.

³ *Ibid.*, i, 18.

⁴ Afterwards Lord Templetown, an intimate friend of the Hollands.

times in a hundred, but that I trusted to a noble and worthy ambition, which I thought I saw very strong in him, and which gave me the strongest assurance that he would neither disappoint the public nor his friends. Tho' Charles won't promise anything positively upon this subject, yet he acknowledges himself to be entirely of my opinion." ¹

It seems extraordinary, with the example of his elder son before his eyes, that Holland should have allowed his heart's delight to run such risks, especially when out of his sight. Unfortunately, his ideas on the training of character were based upon false premises. Some temperaments might have withstood the strain. But the natures of his children were too frail to survive the rude tests to which they were submitted ; and their fond father never grasped that all-important fact until it was too late.

Holland had not wintered well. He complained that gout and rheumatism made walking a difficulty. His friends thought that he was breaking up fast. "He has more of the old man in his speech, which you remember was remarkably quick and lively," wrote Gilly Williams to Selwyn.² In February, he was said, for three days, to be at death's door from his old complaint, asthma. As he found that the malady was not improved by the heat of the House of Lords, it probably accounted for the fact that he took no part in debates. He even announced, at the end of April, that he would not risk further attendance³ ; and made over his proxy to his brother. He was not well enough to accompany the party to Paris, but went with them to Calais for the sake of the sea voyage. During Lady Holland's absence, he passed most of his time at Kingsgate. Their youngest son, Henry, a boy of ten, whose chief interests in life at that time were centred in horses, spent his holidays there.

¹ C. Upton to Holland, May 17, 1765.

² December 1, 1764 (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, i. 325).

³ Holland to Lady Holland, April 30, 1765.

"Harry has a pretty horse to ride and his whole stables full to look after. He is the picture of health and good nature; but he lives with the horse; stinks, talks and thinks perpetually of the stables; and is not a very good companion. Now my others have gone, I'll try to make him a little more so. I love to hear you speak as you do of Kingsgate solitude. I shall have seen all my visitors, and I don't foresee that one will come after you are here." ¹

Notwithstanding his ill-health Holland was once again dabbling in politics. During the first three months of 1765 the King had been more or less seriously ill. Many people, and the Paymaster amongst them,² believed that he was in the early stages of a consumption. No provision for a Regency had been made; and by Walpole's account Holland had urged both Bute and Mansfield to press the King to demand a bill. There seems little doubt that the Paymaster did move in the matter; and that the public were correct in their belief that the bill was largely due to his initiative.

"I have the happy consciousness of having had a great hand in bringing about a Regency. Not in the mode it appears. I only was anxious for a bill, no matter what. And would you believe it, Lord Temple (Pitt, if he had been there) and several others, were against any bill. Lord Shelburne said the Parliament were the natural guardians, and you should let things take their course, let things break. That is, let there be war and confusion, and see what will come of it. Well, there is a bill, and I am heartily glad of it." ³

Holland appears to have been obsessed with the dangers which might arise if the appointment of a Regent was left to be dealt with by Parliament on the spur of the moment, in the event of the King's sudden death. His

¹ Holland to Lady Holland, May 29, 1765.

² Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 98.

³ Holland to J. Campbell, May 29, 1765. Compare *Life of Shelburne*, i. 225, for Pitt's attitude.

suspensions were increased by the line taken by Pitt, Temple and Shelburne in the course of the debates. What actual steps he took, to achieve the purpose which he looked upon as so necessary, are doubtful. A draft of two short alternative motions, designed to raise the subject in Parliament, remains in his handwriting. Probably the paper was intended for Lord Bute. "I tremble," Holland wrote at the end of it, "when I meddle with so great a thing. But malice itself can attribute it to no other than the best of motives, and I am not without hope that His Majesty will see the necessity of some such measure, take it out of my hands, and provide for the security of his children and of his people, without it's being necessary for so little a man as I am to meddle with so very great a matter."

He was, however, relieved of further responsibility. The King requested the Government to furnish a bill, but put forward many of his own proposals for inclusion in it. We can find nothing to shew that Holland busied himself with the details, when once the scheme was launched. He had opposed many of the clauses of the bill of 1751, on which the present measure was founded, because he had been of opinion that Cumberland was not receiving proper consideration. On the present occasion, he had no such interest to occupy him. He was on good terms with Bute, who was still the power behind the throne. But he was no longer consulted by him, as Walpole would have us believe; though on this occasion he seems to have been employed to find out from the latter the sentiments of the old Whig families. Horace, avowedly out to make mischief, was intriguing to benefit his party by increasing the tension between the favourite and the ministers. To this end, he gave encouraging answers to Holland's queries, and thereby had the desired effect of stiffening Bute's back with regard to the bill. The friction between the court and the Government increased daily, and culminated in an insult to the Princess

of Wales. Her name was omitted by the House of Lords from the list of those who were eligible for the post of Regent. From that moment, the King determined to rid himself of Grenville and Bedford once and for all.

Holland took no part in the debates on the bill ; indeed, as we have seen, he absented himself altogether from Parliament on account of health. He announced that he could not even explain the circumstances which had arisen to place such " an indelible slur " on the Princess, having no private intelligence.¹ He rather applauded the King's resolution to allow his mother's name to be struck out. He thought that such action on his part would refute the tale on every one's lips, that she and the favourite were playing a waiting game, and were in reality making a bid for future power. But the Paymaster's hand in the earlier stages of the measure had not gone unobserved. Walpole did not neglect to whisper to the Bedfords the name of the real originator of the bill. It suited his plans that the Government should realise at whose door the blame for their new difficulties should be laid.

The happy relations between Holland and Bedford, which had brightened the dark days of the latter's Lieutenancy in Ireland, had faded into the past. Coldness and suspicion had taken their places. Holland believed that his Grace's breach with Lord Bute was the reason for these changed circumstances.² He could find no other explanation. Bedford's quarrel with the favourite had originated in a series of supposed slights during his stay in Paris as plenipotentiary. The flame had been fanned by the Duchess, Lord Gower's sister, a haughty dame who could twist her lord and master this way and that with consummate ease.³ Her enmity to Bute can perhaps be traced to a disappointment in her hopes of

¹ Holland to Lady Holland, May 7, 1765.

² Fox's *Memoir*, p. 81.

³ " Vain, foolish, wicked, with a very defective understanding," was Holland's description of her.

obtaining a coveted post in the Queen's household. Fox defended his leader warmly against the attacks of the irascible little Duke. Once again he suffered from the belief that their political connection was of a closer nature than was actually the case. That was his first crime. Next came Rigby's defection. The latter's influence over Bedford was second only to that of the Duchess; and his weight was doubtless thrown into the scale against the man whom he had so recently deserted. Bedford had approved of Fox's action in taking office, and his letters throughout the winter of 1762 and the following spring were full of laudatory phrases. Yet early in 1764, we find him trying to poison Grenville's mind against his old friend, by telling him that the latter hated him more than any one on earth.¹ Old ties were soon forgotten amid the glamour of new associations.

The court commenced its campaign against the ministers by a tactical mistake, which was fraught with important consequences. The King declared open war against Grenville, before he had succeeded in securing a successor capable of carrying on the business of the country. His original intention was to place Lord Northumberland, Bute's son-in-law, at the head of an Administration composed of the Newcastle and Pitt factions. His uncle, Cumberland, was employed as negotiator; but his efforts proved futile. Temple had just been privately reconciled to Grenville; and Pitt had no intention of being drawn in at the tail of the Whig party, who were not strong enough at the moment to form a lasting Government by themselves. Consequently, the King was left at the mercy of those whom he had so bitterly offended.

Grenville shewed no mercy in the hour of triumph. He found himself in a position to dictate terms, and made the most of his opportunity. On May 22, he consented to return to office, on three conditions. Bute must be

¹ *Grenville Corres.*, ii. 483.

dismissed for ever from the King's presence ; his brother, Mr Mackenzie, must be deprived of the Scotch Office, though it was well known that His Majesty had promised the place to him for life ; and Lord Granby, rather than Cumberland, must be appointed Captain-General, to deal with the weavers' riots which at that time were disturbing the peace of the metropolis.

To the two former stipulations, the King was forced to yield, although, in the second, his honour was at stake. On the third point, he declined to give way ; and next day ministers substituted for it a new proviso, that Lord Holland should be dismissed from the Pay Office. To this, the King raised no special objection ; and Sandwich was ordered to write a letter to Holland announcing his dismissal. But as he was actually living in the Pay Office lodgings, which had been lent him two years before, he excused himself from the invidious task ; and Holland received the news of his removal from Lord Halifax.¹

¹ Halifax to Holland, May 23, 1763.

CHAPTER XXX

THE fact that his place was required of him did not cause Holland any surprise. Indeed, he fully expected that he would be asked by the King to surrender it, in the course of the changes which he knew were in contemplation ; and was not without hopes that the coveted earldom would be bestowed on him as a solatium.¹ Yet he was piqued and annoyed at the manner in which the blow had fallen. The amazing ingratitude of the Bedford party, to whom he did not hesitate to impute his fall, hurt his feelings. Although he had gone out of his way to assist his master, he remained neglected, while his enemies gained all the rewards.

“ At the same time that I feel as much warmth as when I was a younger man to those I love and have reason to love, I can't hate. I am sure I have reason enough to hate, and to be angry. And I represent it to myself as it is. But yet I am not angry. Surpriz'd that I am not ; but I am not. Horror and indignation at the usage the K., Ld Bute and Mr Mackenzie have met with, and that there was power to use them so, I really have ; but for myself, no. I have this moment met, in the last paragraph of *Dr Hill upon Rage*, some *prose*, that my philosophy (natural philosophy, I suppose, for there has been no art or study, I'll swear) has luckily made for me *sans le savoir*. ‘ Anger washes, and even tears, the frame, by the disturbance it creates within us. It is not worth *the old man's* while for anything to give himself the discomposure. To live at ease is what he has to wish, and to sum up all, *To live at ease is the sure method to live long.*’

¹ Holland to Lady Holland, May 19, 1765.

"This is bad news for the person who prophecy'd at Bd House that this would kill me. If it was Rigby, must I, amidst all this wisdom, to be sincere, own the weakness, that his unmerited unkindness goes to my heart? I mean of two years ago, for I know of nothing new regarding him."¹

Future discoveries proved to him that his suspicions of his old allies were correct. "There was a meeting at Bedford House of G. Grenville, D. and Dss of Bedford and the 2 Secrs and Ld Gower and others, from whence G. Gr. went late at night to the K., and insisted on my being turned out."² Again: "That tell-tale, the Duke of Bedford, has owned that Lord Gower impelled him to turn me out, by telling him (you know with what truth) the dealings I had with you against them."³ He swallowed his disappointment over the loss of the coveted honour without complaint. "I should have liked to have been an earl," he wrote to his wife; "but you can, I am sure, and indeed I should be asham'd if at my age I could not, give up that with the utmost ease."⁴

On May 16 and 18, Bute, whom Holland had not set eyes on since April 23, had sent him messages by Mackenzie, to the effect that the King was preparing to make fresh arrangements, but that, as he was not an active participant in the schemes, he was not at liberty to impart to him the little which he knew. He implored him, however, not to absent himself at so important a crisis.⁵ Consequently, Holland remained in town till the 19th; but on that date, seeing no object in loitering there any longer, he left for Kingsgate.

The King, as a matter of fact, was carrying on a negotiation with Pitt and Temple, through Cumberland; and

¹ Holland to H. Walpole, June 11, 1765 (Waller MSS.).

² Holland to J. Campbell, August 26, 1765.

³ Holland to Bute, August 27, 1765.

⁴ May 26, 1765.

⁵ Bute to Lord Holland, May 17, 1765.

nothing was more improbable, as Holland truly remarked, than that he would have been let into the secret.¹ But the very fact that Bute was known to be in communication with him raised the suspicions of the Government. To give them their due, appearances were certainly misleading. But though ministers were perfectly correct in assuming that the Paymaster had had some hand in the initiation of the Regency Bill ; though they were perfectly correct in believing that he was at all times ready to testify to Bute's honesty and honour ; yet they were equally incorrect in persuading themselves that he was cognisant of the plans for a new Administration.

“ You'll not pay so bad a compliment to my understanding as to think I had any share in the contrivance of a matter so conducted. Upon my honour, I had no knowledge of it, and came away Sunday, the 19th, without any but what was publick in the streets. On Thursday, the 23rd, I was turn'd out without the least civility ; as a party to what I really knew nothing of. But perhaps, Mr Campbell, my behaviour to Ld B. was an unpardonable reproach to Bedford House, who have had ten times the obligations to him that I have. They, I understand, have been the chief actors, and, ungrateful themselves, are angry that I am not so too. But good God ! this is nothing. The ministers who were to be turn'd out were (wisely !) the first who were told it. . . . Had this employment been taken from me civilly (for it must, I know, go to the H. of Commons) I should have had another feather, may be, in my cap. But what then ! That's all I lose, and as for pride, anger and all such passions, I think the sea air wafts them all away. They don't at all molest me. But the humbl'd K. ! the mortify'd and oppress'd Ld B. ! My heart bleeds for them.”²

Notwithstanding his curiosity to find out the reason for his summary dismissal, Holland stayed on in the country. He was inclined more and more to the belief

¹ Holland to Lady Holland, May 29, 1765.

² Holland to J. Campbell, May 29.

that friendship for Bute was his chief offence. Digby had broached a theory that ministers had removed him to make themselves popular. His reply to this was: "A measure to make the D. of Bedford and Sandwich popular would make a dog laugh."¹ Sandwich's answers to his queries were shuffling and unsatisfactory. George Grenville even went the length of refusing to discuss the subject at all with Lord Hillsborough.² But in the course of his efforts to glean the truth about himself, Holland stumbled unexpectedly on facts which threw an entirely new light on the events of the spring. A conversation with Bute on October 7—their first meeting since April—gave him the clue to the mystery.³ He discovered that the King had turned to Cumberland for advice in March, before he dismissed the Ministry, and that Bute had not been in any way consulted ever since.

"Things appear to me in a new light, and will to you, if you can believe, as I do, what I did not at all imagine, but have not the least doubt of now my Lord Bute has told it me upon his word. The King consulted the Duke of Cumberland before he turn'd out his late ministers, and not Lord Bute. He has consulted upon everything ever since the Duke of Cumberland, and not Lord Bute. Lord Bute do's not see, and for many months has not seen, the K. in private. You will hate the Duke more than ever; but I will have something to say to that by and by. How far Lord Bute could have prevented H.M. putting himself under such an adviser, how soon he foresaw it or guess'd at its consequences, I don't know. But so it was, and you will no longer wonder that those who had been contending with the King this last two years, and were quite beat out of the field, gain'd an entire conquest. In this view of the case, I cou'd only blame Lord Bute, in facilitating the K.'s consent to Mr Mackenzie's dismissal, as he owns he did. A false punctilio, but what with you or me, Mr Campbell, wou'd

¹ Holland to W. Ellis, July 1, 1765.

² Hillsborough to Holland, May 30, 1765.

³ Holland to W. Ellis, October 7, 1765.

have had a very different effect. The Earl of Strafford's letter to King Charles ye First did not make H.M.'s passing the Bill of Attainder more excusable. The late King, when he nam'd his promise of the Garter to Lord Granville, was told by the Duke of Newcastle that H.M. knew my Lord Granville had given up that promise. The King answer'd (as the Duke of Newcastle told me), '*And do's he deserve it the less for that?*'

"And here I will tell you a notion of my own, which every minute's recollection confirms in me, which will soften a little your anger to the Duke, and solve many of the phenomena which have appear'd this last summer. My notion is, that the King put himself into the hands of a man whose understanding was weaken'd by palsy, and yet gave him credit for the same strength of mind that he had once (and only had) been master of. He could not govern his own people, and yet went on 'till he made them govern. H.R.H.s show'd all along great tenderness for the King, which I suppose had great weight, and was certainly very sincere. He frequently fell into fits of crying, and they were almost always followed by submissive counsels. The yielding, even if it had been without terms and but for half an hour, to the old Ministry. The not being able to govern, and yet going on with his friends whom he could not govern. Being able to hear of Pitt, after the treatment he had met from him. His temper so little sanguine, that he could think him or Lord Temple or courting the people (for H.R.H.s made Lord Camden), necessary. The having any fears, any diffidence, of the powers of the Crown, when there was spirit to exert it. These traits have none of them the least resemblance of the Duke of Cumberland I knew.

"I find too from his family, that his head has at times fail'd this last twelvemonths. Do's not this soften you?"¹

Before this letter was written, Cumberland had been laid in his grave. He died suddenly on October 31. He was only forty-four at the time of his death, but his corpulent appearance was suggestive of far more advanced years. Holland was perfectly correct in his belief that

¹ Holland to J. Campbell, November 11, 1765.

the Duke was a changed man. He never fully recovered from a seizure in the autumn of the previous year.

Ever since his breach with Cumberland, Holland had hankered after a reconciliation. He had lost no opportunity of throwing himself in his old friend's way, and had regularly put in an appearance at his levees.¹ But all in vain. His efforts were attended by no measure of success; and his advances to him through Lord Waldegrave, Lord Frederick Cavendish and Lord Albemarle respectively, in 1763, all met the same fate.

An alliance between Richmond and Cumberland in the spring of 1765 raised fresh hopes in Holland's breast. The former told Charles Fox one day in July that he thought the Duke was softening, for recently, when in some dilemma, he had been overheard to say, "If Ld Holland and I were well together, he would soon advise me how to arrange all this." The present difficulty, however, he said, was that the new Rockingham Administration, which had come into being at the beginning of the month under Cumberland's auspices, were terrified of appearing to favour Lord Bute's friends. Yet Richmond expressed himself hopeful that something might be arranged later on in the year.²

Thus inspired, Holland again approached Lord Albemarle on the subject. He had told no one, he wrote, that he had had the courage to compose a letter. On a reconciliation to the Duke, from whom his affection had never been for one moment alienated, depended the only view he had or should have of content and pleasure for the remainder of his days.³ Clearly his anticipations were again disappointed, for in October we find the new Minister, Rockingham, writing to Cumberland for advice

¹ Hardwicke to Newcastle, January 1, 1763 (*Life of Hardwicke*, iii. 451).

² C. J. Fox to Holland, July 13, 1765.

³ This letter, dated July 18, is printed in *Memoirs of Rockingham*, . 238.

upon a delicate situation which seemed likely to arise.¹ He had received a hint from Ranby, the King's surgeon, that Lord Holland, with whom he was not personally acquainted,² was intending to attend his levee a few days later. He had recently been approached through various channels to reinstate a friend of the late Paymaster, one Earle, who had been dismissed from a Receivership by Grenville. An injustice had probably been committed; but Rockingham felt that he could not attribute Holland's presence solely to this insignificant affair. He saw in the background a further attempt to regain His Royal Highness's favour; and both he and Grafton were undecided whether any addition of strength which they might gain by Holland's apparent support, would not be outweighed by the dislike which the public would evince to his appearance in their company. Cumberland's reply gives us no clue to the real state of his feelings. He would not encourage his old friend, nor had he any wish to drive him into the arms of the enemy. "I do not see," he wrote, "how you can shut your door upon him; and therefore let the measure be his, and only acceptance on your side." If Holland had really intended to retrieve his position with the Duke on this occasion, it was his last chance. Ten days later Cumberland was no longer in the land of the living.

The attitude adopted by the ministers towards the King upon their return to power, was not calculated to prepossess him in their favour. Bedford, Sandwich, Halifax and Grenville combined to read him a lecture on June 13, which lasted an hour!³ Again he resolved

¹ October 20, 1765 (*Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 240).

² Holland to G. Selwyn, August 16, 1765 (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, i. 394).

³ *Memoirs of Rockingham*, i. 212. Compare Walpole's *Foreign Journals*, 1767 (Waller MSS.). "Ld H. told me that in 1765, when Grenville and the Bedfords had forced themselves again upon the King, the Duke of Cumberland sent in person to the Bedfords to advise them to use their power with moderation and treat the King with respect. Rigby said, 'By G—d, he shall not have power to make a footman.'"

to be quit of them at all costs, and again employed Cumberland to negotiate for him. This time Pitt was practically given *carte blanche*. But Temple held back, much to the annoyance of his brother-in-law, who felt constrained to refuse office without him at the Treasury. Now came the turn of the Whigs. They hardened their hearts, and took their fate into their hands, without Pitt's assistance. A Ministry was formed with Rockingham at its head. Grafton and Conway were Secretaries of State, with Newcastle as Lord Privy Seal. Dowdeswell was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Egmont found a place at the Admiralty.

Holland's friend Welbore Ellis, the Secretary-at-War, was displaced by Lord Barrington. On the other hand, a British peerage was conferred on his nephew, Lord Digby, whose post at the Admiralty was taken from him; and the latter's brother, William, was appointed to a Canonry of Christ Church, Oxford.

Holland shewed no enthusiasm about a Government which proved as hostile to Bute as the former one.

"I thought, tho' I never said so, that the K. must dismiss the late ministers, and I was glad he did so. But what follow'd, my dear Sir, I am strangely mistaken if I spoke of with applause. When they were first dismiss'd, I thought new ministers on one side and the Crown on the other, tir'd of changes, would have moderation and forbearance. The K. alas! seems hardly to have been consulted, which I hoped he would have been. He can't approve of a great deal that he has done; but he resists nothing, and seems satisfy'd with his deliverance from Gr., &c. He speaks of and to his new ministers as his deliverers, but, I fear, do's not think of what you mention, the many who have stood by Government for its own sake and not for Gl's or Bedf's, &c. I hope too that Ld Bute satisfy'd himself with revenge on *his Calcrafts*, and thinks no further. But the contest now is, which shall show most aversion to him, and which shall pay most court to Pitt and Temple. Many think that the

two last (or rather the last) intend to force G. Gr. in again, and take the whole government, and that they will succeed. So many strange things happen, that I don't think about events no experience or good sense can help to form a judgment of.

"For my part, in all the good health that threescore will in a constitution like mine admit of, in good weather, a pretty place, and with a happy family and retir'd with good humour, I am going down the vale of life with ease and cheerfulness, and the more that I don't look upon the publick in that serious light, which perhaps, and to deserve your praises, certainly I ought to do." ¹

Holland had at least one consolation in the new situation. All those of whom he had to complain, the Bedfords, Gower, Rigby, Calcraft and Shelburne had met their deserts and were no longer in power. "I will go through with all you have mentioned," he wrote to John Campbell ²:

"Rigby. As to him, I very ingenuously own I was deceiv'd. I took him to be a very honest man. I lov'd him excessively; others, wiser than me, knew him better. I have nothing to say for this mistake, which has given me more pain than any. As to Calcraft, his bad nature could not bear to be so much oblig'd. I am told, and I believe that I owe his ingratitude to nothing else. Tacitus, I think, says that it is in human nature that a man may be oblig'd into being a bitter enemy. But could I, Mr Campbell, suspect such a nature? A man who could have such suspicion must be miserably wise indeed. Suspicion carry'd so far as that,

*Siculi non invenere tyranni
Tormentum majus.*

Sandwich, I had no reason to expect much from. Nor have I anything to complain of in his regard. Lord Sh—rn. Here I can quite acquit myself. I could not help trusting him: Lord B. trusted him for me. I own I did not see him so bad as he prov'd to be, but I think,

¹ Holland to J. Campbell, August 26.

² October 22, 1765.

I am sure, I should never have trusted him and put it so far in his power to betray me. Lord B. trusted him, not I ; and indeed without that necessity he would never have been so intimate. I did not like him well enough."

Holland's happiest reflections, however, were occasioned by the behaviour of his successor at the Pay Office. Charles Townshend had taken over the post from him; and the consideration which he displayed was as delicate and tactful as it was unexpected. The Townshend brothers had always held aloof from Holland in politics. It is true that their mother, Viscountess Townshend, celebrated before her marriage as Etheldreda Harrison of Balls Park, had for many years been on intimate terms with him. But her eldest son, George, subsequently raised to the rank of marquess, had shewn himself bitterly hostile on all occasions, and it was not until 1770, upon the occasion of his wife's death, that he commenced conciliatory advances.¹ Charles Townshend, certainly, had acted on the same side as Holland on as many occasions as he had opposed him ; but the latter had looked on him as fickle and unreliable, and had regarded his methods and motives with suspicion. Hence his amazement and delight at the new Paymaster's conduct was unbounded. Townshend had refused to accept the appointment until convinced that Holland's dismissal was inevitable.² He went out of his way to confirm certain changes which Holland had contemplated in the office, and treated him generally in a most friendly spirit. " It is a happiness," wrote Holland, " to know that I always wished you well, and never did you an ill office ; but I never deserv'd this, nor can now ever deserve it of you." ³ Townshend's reply took the form of a panegyric :

" Indeed, my Lord, I have reason to know that you

¹ Townshend to Holland, November 3, 1770.

² J. Powell to Holland, May 25, 1765.

³ Holland to C. Townshend, June 2, 1765.

have always done me the honor of wishing me well. Ill offices, in the strict sense of that expression, I believe you never did any man ; good offices, I am sensible, you have often done me, and, if upon the present occasion I have been able to manifest my regard for your Lordship, let it not be thought a part suddenly assumed, for it is the result of habitual sentiment.

“ It is not to be wondered at, that, in the various revolutions of the last unsettled years in court and Government, and in which your Lordship has acted always a leading, and sometimes the deciding, part, you should have drawn upon yourself much of the jealousy and party malice which so distinguish, not to say disgrace, the age. But, my Lord, you wrong yourself, when you conclude from hence that you have been the most hated man in the world. On the contrary, most men agree that those very appearances upon which your political enemies have most dwelt, have been brought upon you by an excess of kindness to others, and by qualities which no man hates : and some, who have attended to the rise of those whom you have raised and to their conduct towards you, go so far as to say, that no man ever, in the cultivation of friendship, reaped so scanty a harvest from so much labour as Lord Holland has done.”¹

Upon the formation of the Rockingham Administration, Charles Townshend was offered, first, the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards that of Secretary of State. He refused both offices, over-persuaded probably by his elder brother, who vainly coveted the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. He told Charles Fox that he would not be responsible for measures “ which he supposed would be whatever Mr Pitt should graciously please to command.”² He remained therefore at the Pay Office, and in September paid his predecessor a visit at Kingsgate. “ He was very kind and very entertaining,” wrote

¹ C. Townshend to Holland, June 3, 1765.

² C. J. Fox to Holland, July 13, 16, 20, 1765.

Holland. "The newspapers have in vain look'd for something else." ¹

Another prospective visitor during the autumn might not have received so cordial a welcome. Sandwich actually reached a point two miles below the Nore on his way by sea to Kingsgate, but was turned back by adverse winds. He had long promised to stay with Holland in the country, and had wagered ten guineas to one that he would be with him before the end of the year. Perhaps he was not altogether sorry to be able to save his face, if not his money; for he announced that he was not looking forward to the *tête-à-tête*. He regarded it, nevertheless, as an opportunity to learn the language of his adversaries. "Their political writers are such miserable tools, that nothing is to be collected from them. . . . I think my interview with Lord Holland will be but an odd one. However, as I have long promised him a visit, both before and since the changes, I will not be so mean-spirited as to fly the pit." ²

Parliament did not meet until shortly before Christmas. Holland was too unwell to put in an appearance at the House of Lords; nor was he able to attend the debates on American affairs which occupied most of the spring. Indeed, an accidental overdose of medicine in February brought him to death's door.³ He rallied satisfactorily, but remained very weak, and even as late as June was unable to eat solid meat.⁴

A succession of visitors to his sick room kept the invalid fully informed of all that was in progress. Thus he was able to retail at second-hand to his friend John Campbell, who was in Wales, details of the most interesting discussions in Parliament. From these letters we glean his conviction of the instability of the Rockingham Govern-

¹ Holland to W. Ellis, October 28, 1765.

² Sandwich to Bedford, August 26, 1765 (*Bedford Corres.*, iii. 317).

³ Holland to J. Campbell, February 25, 1766.

⁴ *Lady Sarah Lennox*, i. 196.

ment. His view was fully justified. Ministers had to contend with the dislike of the King, the hostility of Pitt, and the popular desire to see the latter again seated at the head of affairs. They carried triumphantly, it is true, their chief measure, the repeal of Grenville's Stamp Act. But their victory was in reality a source of weakness. This temporary combination of their scattered forces only displayed their subsequent disunion in more unmistakable form.

The scanty evidence which we possess of Holland's sentiments upon the original act lead us to suppose that he looked upon it with disfavour. "I am more sorry a good deal for the rebellion of the Colonies," he wrote to Ellis. "But I should date it from the passing of the Stamp Act, not the repeal of it."¹ To Campbell, he remarked that he favoured suspension rather than repeal²; but subsequently seems to have agreed with Grafton's view that unless the act was revoked, inconveniences, immediate and certain, would have to be faced, to avoid such as were visionary and remote. "This, I own, is my whole argument, for, in these matters, whatever is remote I think is visionary."³

Deep down in the undercurrents of his thoughts at the moment was a fancy to champion Bute against the world. "I am," he wrote " (as I am told Voltaire is, when the Calas family is named), in a passion which I cannot contain whenever that most honorable and most injured man, Ld Bute, is mentioned."⁴ He seemed ready to approve of any Government which would shew itself favourable to his late leader. But he was in a fever, from the fact of Bute's opposition to Rockingham on the question of repeal, and from certain rumours which were in the air, lest he should contemplate reconciliation with George

¹ August 8, 1768.

² January 31, 1766.

³ Holland to J. Campbell, March 11-13, 1766.

⁴ Holland to Richmond, May 26, 1766.

Grenville. Bute's party held the balance between the opposing factions in Parliament, and was therefore regaining some ascendancy. The impression was again general that the King was secretly acting in collusion with the favourite. Holland seems to have shared to some extent in this belief; for, on February 11, he wrote to him as follows:

“MY EVER DEAR LORD,

“Nobody knows, or will know of my writing this insignificant letter. The errors in it, or my error in writing it (if it is one), I hope you will excuse, as you know my attachment to you, and to you only. It is not willingly, nor without a great deal of thought, that I now wish the K. wd take Mr Pitt. Pardon the expression, my Lord, but you cannot with honor forgive Mr Grenville, etc. The whole world knows their behaviour in the Regency Bill, and what the Duke of Bedford and Mr Rigby said publicly, which perhaps nobody dared repeat to you. Mr Grenville, in his speech, said the Princess of Wales was left out of the Regency, because they supposed it wd be agreeable to all the world; and to shew that this offensive apology for themselves was not made by chance, Ld Sandwich said the same thing in the House of Lords the next day. If I had a mind to forgive Calcraft, I cd not do it. Let me again repeat you cannot in honor forgive Grenville, &c. Consider too, my Lord, what you have told me of him relating to yourself, and let me only put you in mind now that, in April '64, my Lord Gower said that my Lady Bute had, thro' him, desired the Duke of Bedford's *leave* for your Lordsp to come to town on your private affairs, and Ld Sandwich bragg'd to me that the Duke of Bedford's was wrought to consent to it. I remember well the indignation I felt and express'd on this. Your Lordship may remember the many things you have yourself told me. Once more, you cannot, you must not forgive Grenville.

“For the present ministers I have not a word to say. They every one of them deserve extremely ill of you, and therefore, upon my word, have not one of them the least degree of my affection or attachment. In this situa-

tion of things I earnestly recommend Pitt. He has lost a good deal of popularity, he has seen how suddenly it may all vanish ; he will not be that commanding, that termagant Pitt, that he was a month ago, nor come link'd with your inveterate and malicious enemy, Ld Temple. He will gladly go into the House of Lords, which will supply what is wanting to the Ministry there. The first thing he will do, will be to restore Mr Mackenzie, that is, the King's honor ; and the whole world will applaud it without one dissentient voice. He declares that the Earl of Bute ought to have that situation at court his rank and favor intitle him to ; he will restore Ld Despencer,¹ and shew regard, and if I mistake not take a pride in shewing regard, to your friends, which he declares it is mean cowardice and absurd fear in the present ministers to be so averse to. These at least are my hopes ; and I should not despair of seeing a quiet court, Parliament and nation, and my Lord Bute respected and honored as he ought to be. If I am not very much mistaken you wd not be a minister ; if I were hearken'd to, you would be Ld Chamberlain. This scheme will give you the entire use too of Charles Townshend, and, which is no small matter, save the K. from that disgrace which will accompany his memory in the mind of every subject he has, if he is ever again in the hands of Mr Grenville. My dear Lord, let me beg you to read this letter over more than once ; it is the only trouble I will ever wish to give you.

“ Adieu.

“ Yrs, with a sincerity you can't doubt,

“ H.”

Bute, in reply, disclaimed all knowledge of the intentions of the court. “ My temper,” he wrote, “ is ever ready to forgive when it is ask'd with repentance, and who have I not to forgive except yourself ? As to measures they are of a serious nature indeed to me, as to men highly indifferent. But this you may depend on. No reconciliation, if that should ever be the case with men who have cruelly us'd me, in which number I include the

¹ Sir Francis Dashwood

person you seem to approve, shall ever make me depart from my principles of supporting Govt, be it when H.M. pleases, and this as a private Ld of Parlt; for I have bid adieu to office." ¹

Was it more than a coincidence that Grenville and Bedford next day met Bute at Lord Eglinton's house? Temple had also announced his intention of being present, but failed to put in an appearance. They came as suppliants, to crave assistance from the man whom they had so ruthlessly hunted from power; and gained nothing but abasement. Bute had little to say to them, and refused to come to any agreement. The meeting, he said, was none of his making.

Holland thought that Bute had been in the wrong to meet them at all, but considered that nothing could have turned out more to his honour and more to their shame.² He had a further opportunity to speak out again a few weeks later. Early in May, he was approached by his brother-in-law, Richmond, who asked whether he still had communication with Bute, and whether he believed that the latter would support the Government, if a place was given to his brother.³ His reply read as follows:

"If the present Ministry either cannot or will not go on without help, and yet will not accept of help, what can be said of them?"

"Mr Mackenzie should be restored in the first place, and without delay, for the sake of the King's honor; and concerning this there would not be in the world two opinions. Now to the point. Help, you say, is at hand by a great employment to Lord Northumberland and several others—conditions, you say, not to be complied with. But why not? I will call the Ministry, Lord Rockingham, Mr Conway (for the Duke of Grafton seems to have put himself out of the case), my Ld Winchelsea, the Duke of Newcastle; and then add Ld Egmont and

¹ [February 11, 1766].

² Holland to J. Campbell, March 11-13.

³ Compare Walpole's *Memoirs*, ii. 318.

Ld Chancellor. Will they be hurt or strengthened by the accession of Ld Northumberland and of A., B., C., for I name no names, and amongst them by all means Norton, if room can be found for him? I see the appearance of great strength and great stability to this Administration; and no one inconvenience from it, if Ld Northumberland (which was mentioned and which Ld Huntingdon's most ridiculous attachment to Ld Camden makes one wish) were to be Groom of the Stole. Would the Ministry be put in any danger by it?

"On the other side, if you will neither have help nor go on without it, a new set must be brought forward. Ld Bute will have nothing to do with it, but his friends, I am afraid, would be inclined to George Grenville. No flattery, no professions, no protestations, by continued messages (as I suspect by Jenkinson, Dyson, Wedderburn and others) have been spared; and when they have had no effect, any more than Mr Pitt's more manly and open declarations in favour of Lord Bute, it is a proof that my Lord Bute does not intend to meddle again at court. Lay that down then as a certainty, and don't let the Ministry yield itself up to a vain fear of what does not exist. If they do, Grenville, whom of all mankind I detest the most, or Pitt, Lord Camden, Lord Shelburne and Mr Calcraft, whom I do not love much better, must come in. I have a choice; but I see no reason Lord Bute's friends have to wish either of these sets or the present Ministry at all better one than the other."¹

A few days later Grafton resigned the Secretaryship. He was succeeded by Richmond, much against the wishes of the King, who had never forgiven him for his conduct in 1761.² His entrance into the Ministry clothed it with fresh interest in Holland's eyes. The latter repeated his arguments.

"Set down all you have to go to market with, offer it without hesitation, handsomely and all together. Let the King be *himself* the agent. So shall ye avoid the disgrace of being refus'd. What the King do's himself

¹ Holland to Richmond, May 4, 1766.

² See *ante*, ii. 124.

he will probably be sincere in. And when ye have got Mr Mackenzie, Ld Northumberland, Sr Fl. Norton, Dr Haye [and] (if they have a mind to it) A, B, and C, placed with you by the King not in places of administration, you will be thought to be, and be as strong as any Ministry ever was. But if this is not done, then act alone, and you will certainly succeed, tho' not mov'd on so pleasantly. But, for God's sake, do not think of the Bedfords. Must the King have the further disgrace of employing and rewarding those who force him to break his word : and so approve of the dismissal of Mackenzie ? Besides, the Duke of Bedford can't come without bringing some who may interfere in administration. I am the more alarm'd at your mentioning the Bedfords, because I am told Lord John Cavendish, who detests Lord Bute, dislikes Pitt, Grenvilles and many others, declares that he likes Rigby. If I am well inform'd, pray ask Lord John whether it is for his virtue or what honest or good quality, that Rigby is excepted and admitted into his Platonick republick ?

"For God's sake, my Lord, get the help you and ev'ry body should approve, or go on alone with firmness, which will ensure success ; but no Rigby, Gower, &c. I don't write to have any answer, but my paper can do no harm, and I hope may be of some use, and I most sincerely wish you well.

"I should be glad to know how the place of V.-Tr. was offer'd to Mackenzie, and by whom ?

"For A, B, C, put Ld Despencer, Stanley, Ellis, Nugent." ¹

Holland's advice was not acceptable to the Ministry. Newcastle and the Cavendishes between them were powerful enough to prevent the inclusion of Bute's friends, and Rockingham's heart was not sufficiently in his work to enable him to take a strong line. The impending catastrophe, therefore, was not long delayed. Lord Chancellor Northington, realising the weakness of the situation, resolved to leave the sinking ship ; and his resignation in

¹ Holland to Richmond, May 26, 1766.

July gave the King an opportunity to dismiss the whole crew.

Pitt was summoned to the closet. For once he refused to be influenced by Temple's objections, and proceeded to form a Ministry without him. Conway and Shelburne were the new Secretaries of State. Grafton became the nominal head of the Treasury, with Charles Townshend as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Camden took the post of Lord Chancellor; while Northington joined the Government as President of the Council. For himself, Pitt kept the Privy Seal, at the same time accepting a peerage and pension.

Holland took these changes with equanimity. "Pitt alone," he wrote, "is surely infinitely better than Pitt and Temple. The King has certainly better'd himself, and if he pleases has better'd himself a great deal."¹ He drew a comparison, which did not flatter Pitt, between the conduct of Lord Sunderland in 1710 and that of the new peer.² But he hailed with delight the reinstatement of Mr Mackenzie, as well as the promotion of Lord Northumberland;³ and was satisfied beyond measure that neither George Grenville nor the Bedfords had secured any of the pickings. "That rascal Grenville" was at the moment his especial *bête noir*.

¹ Holland to Ilchester, July 20; August 6, 1766.

² "When word was brought the E. of Sunderland, dismiss'd from being Secy of State in 1710, that Her Majesty, as a testimony of her Royal favour, & of her being fully satisfy'd with his Lordship's services, design'd to present him with 3,000*£* pr ann. to be settled upon him for life, his Lordship answer'd he was glad Her Majesty was satisfy'd he had done his duty; but, if he could not have the honour to serve his country, he would not plunder it."

"When Mr Pitt obtains, *he says, the spontaneous*, others assert the *requested*, instances which have appear'd of His present Majesty's munificence, viz. a peerage & a pension of 3,000*£* a year, the patriot minister takes them as his due."

³ Lord Northumberland was given a dukedom in October.

"If you say, *what has G. G. done to you*, I will tell you what Mr Crewe said in answer to that question, when he would not dine where Mr Calcraft did. 'Must I stay till a man is dishonest to me, before I have an ill opinion of him?' G. G.'s ingratitude to Lord Bute is, I really think and hope, in some particulars beyond example, even in a time very fruitful of examples."¹

Holland's relations with the Bedfords had taken a somewhat peculiar turn. During the latter days of March, Stephen Fox had become engaged to Lady Mary Fitzpatrick, daughter of John, first Earl of Upper Ossory. Her father had died in 1758, and her mother, a younger sister of the Duchess of Bedford, had, during the following year, married Richard Vernon, of Hilton, in Staffordshire. Both families welcomed the match. The Hollands were hopeful that a happy marriage would cause Ste. to break away from his unfortunate propensities. He seems to have made himself popular enough in society. But an incipient deafness and a marked tendency to obesity were defects which time was unlikely to improve.² The young lady was all that could be desired. Lady Sarah Bunbury described her as "a little blessed angel," and wrote that she answered the French expression of "*une physionomie interessante*" better than anybody. "There is a *doux, je ne sais quoi*, in her that is charming; her voice goes to one's heart and leaves a sort of tenderness in it, that she can say nothing that is indifferent to one."³

On their side, the Bedfords looked to make capital out of the connection, by contriving a reconciliation with Bute through Holland's agency.⁴ But they reckoned without their host. Holland was not to be so easily

¹ Holland to Ilchester, August 6, 1766.

² His portrait, painted in 1764 by Reynolds, gives him a loutish appearance and weak expression, which seems out of place in those generations of Foxs.

³ *Lady Sarah Lennox*, i. 193.

⁴ *Walpole's Memoirs*, ii. 313.



LADY MARY FOX.
By P. Battoni.

appeased. He was ready to make most liberal settlements, and to receive his future daughter-in-law with open arms. But to certain members of her family he remained unapproachable.

"The D. of Bedford sent me word that he heard I was ill, and he wou'd wait on me. I declin'd receiving his visit. Nor will I see him or his Dutss. I wrote to him that I did not doubt his usage of me proceeded from misinformation ; but I beg'd leave to say that was no excuse.

"I laid on Lord Gower and Mr Rigby, who are in no degree whatever, I assure you, better than Calcraft. Lord and Lady Waldegrave and Mr Vernon, the young lady's father-in-law, I am willing to see.

"I hope I have adhered to my good opinion, and my friendships form'd upon it. Surely it is as much the part of a man to keep to his ill opinion and resentment, when there is reason sufficient given for it. Am I in the right ?

"The Duke of Bedford is a fool, and capable of being made to act unworthily, and of thinking, as soon as he can forget it, that the injured may forget and forgive it too. I am not of that make in either of these instances, and am not sorry that I should be seen to think myself, as I hope and believe you and Mr Nicoll think me, far above the Duke of Bd." ¹

The marriage was celebrated on April 20, in the private chapel at Bedford House. Whether Holland sank his pride sufficiently to be present at the ceremony does not transpire. Yet we cannot imagine that his affection for his son would have allowed him to remain absent, had health permitted. He took the opportunity of handing over to him the whole of his landed property outside the counties of Somerset and Kent. This was sufficient to secure Ste. an immediate income of £3,500 a year, besides

¹ Holland to Mrs Nicholl, March 31, 1766. Holland's letter to Bedford and his reply are printed in *Bedford Corres.*, iii. 330. Holland excused himself on the grounds that, though he would not be wanting in courtesy to the Duke himself, he could not be answerable for his feelings if Lord Gower and Rigby were mentioned.

a jointure for his wife of £1,500, and the prospect of a further £1,000. In fact Holland omitted nothing which could conduce to the young people's comfort. "Jointure, pin money and ev'rything may be just as Lady Mary pleases."¹ The house on the property at Winterslow which Holland had recently purchased near Salisbury,² was to be their residence. It had already been renovated and put in order, under Ilchester's supervision, from plans drawn by Nicholl.³

Of Charles Fox we hear little at this time. He had finally left Oxford in the spring of 1766, and early in September was shooting partridges at Kingsgate, "very eager & never killing."⁴ Later in the month he left England with his father and mother for the sunny shores of the Mediterranean. Their sojourn abroad, which was arranged for the good of Holland's health, extended to many months. So shaky did the old man appear, that his friends doubted the possibility of his reaching Naples alive.⁵ He had serious doubts himself whether he should ever return. Yet he looked on his complaint as nervous.

¹ Holland's memorandum. "Given to the Duchess of Bedford," March 29, 1766.

² See *ante*, ii. 283.

³ Ilchester's objections to the suggested rebuilding of the whole residence, some eighteen months before, are worthy of a passing glance:

"Building a new house is quite a different thing. Everybody gives advice, and makes the house bigger and more expensive, & Winterslow is by no means a proper place for anything like a seat. But for hare-hunting it may be made a very agreeable hunting place. As for fox-hunting, the woods are so large that it will be too laborious, and indeed labour and sorrow, as I believe Mr Bathurst has found. But pray take notice of a piece of advice given me 35 years ago. Don't let a sporting house be large; for if your company is numerous you will seldom have good sport. There will be drinking and gaming enough, but of shooting and hunting but a little" (Ilchester to Holland, October 2, 1764).

⁴ Holland to Ilchester, September 3, 1766.

⁵ G. Williams to G. Selwyn, August 19, 1766 (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, i. 397). This letter is printed as of 1765. It was clearly written a year later.

"What a machine I am. If I had wrote yesterday, I should have said I was materially better; but an accident to my building, and a passion, made me lie awake all last night, and gave me asthma—a proof that that is nervous not dropsical. I am a vaporish old woman."¹

His medical attendant diagnosed heart weakness, increased by the asthmatic tendency. He prescribed a meat diet, which worked wonders at the right moment and fortunately gave him the necessary strength to face the fatigues of his long journey.

Racked by these uncertainties, Holland made a further effort, before leaving home, to obtain that earldom, which unfortunately for his dignity and peace of mind was henceforward the goal of his desires. He began by asking Walpole to suggest to Richmond that he should request the King for that coveted honour, as a parting gift on leaving office. Horace saw the Duchess next day, and elicited the fact that her spouse was in no mood to ask favours. Perhaps Holland had also outside intelligence of the same, or had realised that his brother-in-law was not the most likely man to win him success, for he wrote again to Walpole telling him not to push the matter any further.²

His next move was still more audacious. He wrote direct to the King:

"SIRE,

"I ask a thousand pardons for the presumption I am going to take in writing to your Majesty. I shall let no body know it; I hardly dare think of it myself. But I certainly will not add importunity to presumption. Your Majesty knows whether I have not readily obeyed whatever I knew were your commands. If ever I have been in fault to your Majesty, upon my word I do not

¹ Holland to Ilchester, July 20, 1766.

² Holland to H. Walpole, July 31, 1766 (Waller MSS.): H. Walpole to Holland, August 2, 1766. Holland's second letter is not preserved.

know it myself. Your Majesty, in the year 1763, was so gracious as to tell me that had you had occasion for my place in July that year, you would not have taken it away without giving me what I should have liked as well. You were so good as to let me know that it was not your Majesty who displaced me in May, last year. May I not humbly hope that disgraced, not to please (but in order to displease) your Majesty, I shall not now remain so? The triumph this disgrace is to those who occasioned it (some of the most ungrateful and perfidious friends that man ever was cursed with) is, however mortifying, but a private consideration, and would be very much to be despised if your Majesty could be induced to declare me, before I leave England, Earl of Rochester. If I never return to thank your Majesty, my family will, and, I can answer for it, show themselves on every occasion and at all events, with sentiments of the warmest gratitude added to those of the firmest loyalty, your Majesty's most zealous and faithful subjects. I beg leave with all humility to subscribe myself, Sire, your Majesty's most sincere, most submissive, most dutiful, and most devoted subject and servant

“ HOLLAND.

“ KINGS_GATE, *August 30, 1766.*”

Can we not picture to ourselves the old man seated by the seashore at his beloved Kingsgate, daily waiting for the reply on which he so foolishly staked the happiness of his remaining years? The sight might have softened a more stony heart than that of King George. But no answer was forthcoming, though the reason of His Majesty's obstinacy is difficult to understand. Holland had done him yeoman's service; and it would have cost nothing to grant him this favour, which he had fully earned. Yet the monarch's reluctance to bestow peerages in the early years of his reign is very noticeable; and his grudge against Holland for his reputed advice in 1751 may have militated against any exception being made in his case.

Bute, to whom Holland had privately communicated

his intentions, was powerless to help him. "'Tis now above a year," he wrote, "since I have seen the K., or have heard anything of him, except from uncertain authority." So ignorant was he, he told Holland, of what was going on, that neither he nor the Princess of Wales knew anything of the formation of the new Ministry until after it was an accomplished fact; and said that he was never even informed of his brother's restoration to office. To such lengths was his proscription carried even under the new regime.¹

But although rebuffed, Holland remained unabashed. For upon his arrival in England a year later he again returned to the charge. The ridicule of his enemies was a determining factor in his persistence. Time there had been when he would have brushed aside sneers and abuse alike unmoved; but illness had sapped his imperturbability. "I am a weak old man and sensible to the jeers and taunts of Rigby, some of which I heard but last week. I am only laugh'd at. I am asham'd of this, but I can't help it."²

This time he decided, apparently by the advice of Charles Fox—an interesting sidelight on his confidential relations with his eighteen-year-old son and his dependence on his counsel—to ask an audience of the King. He requested both Bute and Grafton to use their good offices on his behalf. The message which the former sent was coldly received. Indeed, Holland fancied that it had done more harm than good. "Whilst Lord Bute is cry'd out upon for doing everything at court, he *can* do nothing."³ Grafton's reply too was not over encouraging. The King would see him, but only because he was anxious to explain the difficulties which the request would bring him at the moment.⁴

¹ Bute to Holland, September 1, 1766.

² Holland to H. Walpole, August 16, 1767 (Waller MSS.).

³ Holland to C. J. Fox, July 24, 1767.

⁴ Grafton to Holland, July 16, 1767.

On July 22, therefore, Holland went to the levee, and was granted half an hour in the closet.¹

"I was at court on Wednesday for the first, and I believe the last time. I had as much to say as any man ever had, and said it. I saw obstinate, determin'd denial, without any reason given; nor had I any occasion to follow your advice *to take a shuffling answer for a denial*, for I was not flatter'd *even with a shuffling, promising answer*, but told it would be very inconvenient to do it now, without being told why."²

He did not, however, confine himself to the appeal which meant so much to him; but poured into the King's ear a torrent of solicited or unsolicited advice.³ He unfolded a plan to put into force that system of bribery, promotion and proscription, which had so successfully carried the peace four years before. The theory that government was a simple matter for one man, if carried on by these ruthless means, was the outcome of Holland's early training in politics. His sole opportunity to put this principle into practice had proved its efficacy. The King might make a page his First Minister, he told Walpole, and could maintain him so, if he went the right way to work.⁴ Favours, rewards and pensions should be kept for the promoters of parliamentary subserviency. In this manner the Opposition could be completely set at nought. To King George, the principle was nothing new. At the moment, however, he dared not make use of it. Yet the methods which he and Lord North subsequently employed were founded upon this identical basis; and Holland, therefore, cannot be exempted from some responsibility for that disastrous policy.

¹ *Grenville Papers*, iv. 88.

² Holland to C. J. Fox, July 24.

³ *Von Ruville*, iii. 231. His authority for the conversation is the report of the Prussian Ambassador, of September 4, 1767, preserved in the Berlin archives.

⁴ Walpole's *Memoirs*, iii. 66.

The motive which induced Holland to open his mind so freely to the King on this occasion was probably largely personal. He was more anxious to secure his advance in the peerage, than to see "the triumph of his political theory," as Dr von Ruville suggests. He had done with public life, and had never interested himself in hypothetical schemes. He hoped to re-establish the influence of Bute at court, whether in or out of office. And once his ill-used friend was restored, he felt convinced that he, too, would feel himself on secure ground.

His interview with the King left him in a hopeful frame of mind. He accepted the fact that nothing would be done for him at the moment ; but took steps to prevent his request being forgotten in the future. With this object in view he again called Walpole to his aid ; and begged him to ask Grafton to intercede for him with the King during the coming months. The Duke promised to do his best, and sent Holland a message to the effect that he felt sure that he would be satisfied with a certain promise of promotion at the end of the session.¹ With this verbal assurance Holland had to rest content, though he vainly tried to get it transmitted to paper.

¹ H. Walpole to Holland, August 15, 1767. Also, August 7, Holland to H. Walpole, August 16, and two undated (Holland House and Waller MSS.).

CHAPTER XXXI

THE Hollands left England on September 23, 1766, accompanied by Mr Upton and their youngest son. Charles had preceded them by a few days, and, with Ste., Lady Mary and Lord Offaly,¹ joined the party at Lyons early in October. Lady Holland was oppressed with misgivings of her husband's state of health, and seriously doubted whether he would again see the shores of England.² Thence Holland, Charles and Offaly went by sea from Marseilles direct to Naples, while the rest of the party followed by road. Their life there was uneventful.

"I am at least as well as when I wrote from Lyons. But my distemper is incurable ; it is, I find, old age. I have no symptom of asthma, dropsy or other distemper. I am in no pain, in no danger, but now and then very languid, and growing feeble, I think, in mind as well as body. I manage both extremely ; sitting as now in the warm and clear sunshine, and thinking of nothing that can (I won't only say vex me) but even employ the understanding of a boy above 10 years old. In this new philosophy of mine (not stoick, for I dread the very thought of pain), I assure you I have made great proficiency. That tenet of Epicurus's, *Nihil beatum nisi quod quietum* is my first principle ; and when I shall have entirely got the better of the fear (and I hope I am very near doing so) of *inexorabile fatum, strepitumque Acherontis avari*, I shall think I am a perfect adept." ³

¹ William Robert Fitzgerald, afterwards second Duke of Leinster, whose elder brother had died during the previous year. His father, Lord Kildare, was created Duke of Leinster in November 1766.

² Lady Holland's Journals.

³ Holland to J. L. Nicholl, December 30, 1766.

Holland left Naples for Rome on March 17, preceded by his wife. They reached Florence on the 31st, where they were joined by Ste. and Lady Mary. There they dawdled for a fortnight.

“ You bid me practice as I preach. If the keeping my mind vacant is what you mean, no man’s has been more entirely so than mine has been this half year. I have a notion that I have a better knack at that than you have. I am sitting at my open window looking upon the Arno, and a most beautiful bridge across it. You, I fancy, would be considering how much the arches departed from semi-circles, and that Sr Chrsr Wren would not have built it so, and why? It is long since I have ask’d myself the why of anything. I am sure I will never ask it again of a physician, and I doubt whether I could bear this place (tho’ but for a week), if the *Casa de Medici* still reign’d here.”¹

At Turin the party broke up. The Foxs started direct for home; and Charles, who, as matters were then decided, was to remain abroad until he came of age,² went to Genoa to meet Lord Fitzwilliam. The Hollands, with Harry and Upton, took the route of the Mont Cenis, and spent a week at Geneva. Thence they set out for England, which they reached on May 25.³ Holland spent the summer of 1767 between Kensington and Kingsgate. New fantasies in building afforded him occupation and amusement. Towards the end of October, he and his wife again set forth for the Continent, taking with them Harry, who had been suffering from an intermittent fever at Eton. Nice was their ultimate destination. In Paris they found Charles. He had come up from Italy to meet them;⁴

¹ Holland to J. I. Nicholl, April 3, 1767.

² *Lady Sarah Lennox*, i, 213.

³ “ I hope we shall be all permitted to sit round your great chair at Holland H. to hear an account of your travels,” wrote George Selwyn on May 23.

⁴ *Lady Holland’s Journals*.

having whiled away the summer months in the congenial society of Fitzwilliam and Uvedale Price, an Eton friend. Another schoolfellow, Lord Carlisle, whose name is carved next to Charles's on the wall of Upper School at Eton, had failed to fulfil his promise to join them. He was constrained to dance attendance on the fascinating Lady Sarah Bunbury, and was too deeply smitten with her charms to be able to tear himself away from England. His defection caused Holland to parody Horace's ode, "Lydia dic per omnes."¹ Indeed, his pen had been responsible for several copies of verses during those peaceful months in Italy. He was well able to hold his own with the poetasters of an age when rhyming was a necessary accomplishment of a gentleman; and the lines entitled, "Lord Holland returning from Italy, 1767," in which he compared the delights of that healthy climate to the murkiness of England, with its Grenvilles, its Rigbys and its Calcrafts, have been reproduced on more than a single occasion.

Nice had none of those attractions to commend it which Holland could recall some thirty years before. But his previous enquiries would not have led him to anticipate any whirl of gaiety.² Ease and repose were the object of his sojourn abroad, and he was successful in finding them on the southern shores of France. Carlisle, who had at last put in an appearance on the Continent, arrived there early in December with Charles. He did not give

¹ See *G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, ii. 154.

"Sally, Sally, don't deny,
But for God's sake tell me why
You have flirted so to spoil
That once lively youth, Carlisle?" etc.

² "There is an assembly at the Comte de Nangis's house every evening, consisting of from 15 to 25 ladies and men in proportion, where they play at cards very low. There is no other meeting of company in the town, and consequently very little, or rather no, amusement. The lodgings are bad, with bare walls and brick floors, and there is certainly nothing to invite strangers thither but the air" (*Breadalbane to Holland*, May 24, 1766).

a good account of his host in his first letters. The climate and the assiduous attentions of the young men, however, soon put a better face on matters. But even their cheerful society could not remove a cloud of depression. He was "universally despised," he wrote.

"Lord Carlisle is very good to Charles, and Charles to me, to be so cheerful as they are in this dull place. Whoever is wicked enough to think heaven *tant soit peu ennuyeux*, may think this place like it. Angels have not better weather; and the place and company and way of life are dull and tiresome beyond expression; no proverbs acted, no make-believe marriages. . . . Here am I, rising myself to heaven, as I have described it; which is the place where, when I leave England next, I am to go to, for I shall cross the seas no more."¹

With his favourite son's departure for Italy, early in February, the gloom deepened. Holland could not bring himself to part with his youngest-born, though his factotum had come all the way from England expressly to take the boy back to Eton.² And so, regardless of the loss of time to his studies, Harry was allowed to stay on with his parents, to accompany them home by a roundabout route through Switzerland and Northern France.

It is amazing to find how far Holland allowed his fondness for his children to carry him. His rule seems to have been a simple one. Whatever pleased him was good for them. Everything was sacrificed to the desire of the moment. He could refuse his sons nothing, without a thought of the effect which might be produced on their characters. We cannot for a moment credit Shelburne's statement that he wrote letters to the boys encouraging them in their follies. Yet the fact remains that they had only to ask, for their wish to be granted. Very

¹ Holland to G. Selwyn, December 23, 1767 (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, i, 210).

² Holland to J. Campbell, April 20, 1768.

different had been his own upbringing. Left alone in the world at an early age, he and his brother had fought their way to the best ranks of society by their own exertions. It was not so with the next generation. Ste. and his brothers were fondled and petted from the cradle by the highest in the land. Their position was fully assured, before they stepped out into the world at a period in English life when the temptations of unruliness and self-indulgence were never more insidious.

Yet not content with launching the nurslings into the turgid eddies of high life in London, where at least they were to some extent under his own eye, Holland must needs introduce them to all the dissipations of the Continent. In the case of the elder, the claims of health made residence abroad imperative; yet we hesitate to believe that the companionship of March and Selwyn was vastly more conducive to good morals than would have been the society of Wilkes.¹ With Charles, however, there was no such justification. An affection for the Italian poets and a thorough command of the French language were desirable accomplishments enough; but they could be purchased at too high a price, if, in their attainment, three valuable years were to be spent in the unwholesome atmosphere of the courts of Europe. Yet this was the path mapped out for him by his fond parent, regardless of its risks; with the result that his career was only saved from premature wreck by his own energy and originality.

Even his education had had its limitations. He had formed a reasonable acquaintance with the classics and mathematics during his stay at the University, but had learnt little which was likely to be of practical use to him.² And here again his thirst for knowledge came

¹ See *ante*, ii. 274. To give Wilkes his due, he was free from the vices of drinking and gambling.

² C. J. Fox to Sir G. Macartney, August 6, 1767 (*Memorials and Corres. of C. J. Fox*, i. 41).

to the rescue ; for his enthusiasm and ambition led him to make up the deficiencies. To that extent at least he justified the confidence which his father reposed in him.

At an age when his fellows were busy on the river and in the playing-fields, he had been taught to interest himself in politics. But the doctrines with which he was made familiar were not founded on the higher flights of statecraft. His views were the views of his father, and Holland's range of thought in the last few years of his life was largely bounded by individual antipathies and personal obsessions. Charles was far more at home with the ingratitude of the Bedford gang, the enormities of Grenville, the peculiarities of Chatham and the indignities suffered by Bute, than with the merits or demerits of the Stamp Act or the vexed question of general warrants, when at the early age of nineteen a seat was found for him in Parliament. His views were unformed. His political conscience was completely in his father's keeping. And we may acclaim his subsequent enthusiasm for the liberties of mankind as a veritable triumph of reason, when we recollect the narrow confines of the chrysalis from which it was his lot to emerge.

A general election in the spring of 1768 was the opportunity chosen for the first appearance of the embryo statesman in the Chamber which was to witness his most famous exploits. Ilchester had been in search of a constituency for his eldest-born. Stavordale was but two years older than Charles, and had already plunged deeply into the vortex of town life. The brothers—no uncommon arrangement in those early days of George III's reign—combined to hire a borough for their sons, and hit upon that of Midhurst. Holland had been instrumental in arranging a dispute between the joint owners, Lord Montagu and Sir William Williams, in 1761, and was therefore fully acquainted with its peculiarities. The little Sussex town was an excellent example of burgage-tenure. The possession of certain plots of land, or hovels,

unfit in many cases for human habitation, constituted the right to a vote in this type of borough. When the title-deeds of these hereditaments were accumulated in one ownership, an election became a simple matter. A few days before the appointed date the proprietor would apportion the property among his servants or representatives, with instructions to return the two members whom he indicated, and to re-execute the deeds in his favour, as soon as the business was concluded.

Under this comfortable system the cousins were returned without opposition. Charles was still absent abroad ; and, strictly speaking, was not qualified to take his seat in the House, being still a minor. He made his appearance there, notwithstanding, at the commencement of November, and spoke regularly, without making any attempt to record his vote. Ste. had also been chosen, but his lot had not fallen on such pleasant ground. He had had to face a strenuous six months' work, in order to woo the electors of New Sarum, thus following in the footsteps of his uncle and grandfather, who had represented the borough many years before. He had been disappointed of a safe seat at Wells in 1765 : and seems to have allowed the promise of a bloodless victory at Stockbridge to slip through his fingers.

Holland himself reached England at the end of May. The negotiations for the purchase of Holland House had been concluded in his absence, and a bill had been passed through both Houses to set it in order. The price asked by Mr Edwardes was high. " I pay," he wrote to his brother, " a great deal more for Holland House than anything but Lady Holland's extreme fondness for it could make it worth." ¹ He made over the property to his wife ²; and during the autumn undertook extensive alterations.

His stay at Kingsgate that year was enlivened by a succession of visitors—too many, in Lady Holland's

¹ March 9, 1768.

² Holland to J. Campbell, April 20.

opinion, to render the summer pleasant. Charles returned early in August, but spent most of September with his brother and sister-in-law in the Low Countries.¹ Yet, notwithstanding the distractions of building a "folly" in honour of a man with whom he was not even acquainted,² and the invention of new embellishments for the house which was one day to be part of his Charles's heritage, Holland could not find sufficient distraction for his thoughts. Old age was hateful to him, and his letters harp on a morbid craving for death. "The truth is," he added, in his letter to Campbell, "that I divert myself; but yet cannot help thinking very often that it were better it were all over." And to Ellis, he wrote:

"You ask me whether I am cheerful and easy; and whether this wet weather affects me? The weather do's not at all affect me; but as to the other question, tho' I feel no pain, and tho' Lady Caroline, Lady Mary and my little grand-daughter,³ and Ste. and Chas and Harry, are all here, and all well, I cannot help feeling, even in the midst of so amiable a family, the truth of what Bishop Hough said, that *length of days is not a desirable thing*. I often cry out, *Oh! wearisome condition of mortality!*"⁴

The Hollands decided not to leave England the following winter. "I propose to go to Holland House, the 20th," wrote the old man, "to be rolled about now and then in the sunshine, whilst there is sunshine; and when the first

¹ Lady Holland's Journals.

² "My tower in honour of Mr Harley is built, I believe, more for my private amusement than from public spirit. But he is really almost the only man that has not been a coward. This gave me the thought, but I own the desire of making Kingsgate still prettier than it is put it in execution" (Holland to J. Campbell, August 26, 1768).

Hon. Thomas Harley was M.P. for the City, and Lord Mayor of London in 1768. He was a strong Tory in his views. The short, squat tower still stands, but has been heightened somewhat since Holland's day. It is sometimes known as "Candlestick Tower," from its peculiar shape.

³ Lady Mary's daughter, Caroline, had been born on November 3 1767.

⁴ August 8, 1768.

bad weather of Novr comes, to shut myself up by the fire in Piccadilly for the whole winter." ¹ Politics occupied less and less of his thoughts. Even the advent to power of the Bedford clique, with whom Grafton had strengthened the Administration early in 1768, left him unmoved.² The general belief had been that he would be granted his earldom before his return from abroad. But with the intuition of a man of maturer years Charles foresaw that the new fusion in the Government would prove a hindrance to what he termed *his father's affair*. He was right. By the middle of March, even Holland had given up hope that anything would be done for him.³

A desire to ingratiate himself with Grafton may be cited as one reason for Holland's reappearance on the public stage during the following year. Wilkes had been returned to Parliament for Middlesex in the course of 1768, but was expelled from the House of Commons in February 1769 on the initiative of the Government. He was re-elected unopposed in March. Again the choice of the voters was set at naught. A fresh writ was issued, and Colonel Henry Luttrell, a supporter of the court, resigned a safe seat in Cornwall to oppose the popular hero. The fact that Luttrell was a son of Bute's friend,

¹ Holland to Ilchester, October 10, 1768. His house was that portion of the Albany which faces Piccadilly. It was remodelled in its present form by Sir William Chambers, after the sale of the property to Lord Melbourne in 1771. Holland seems to have made the purchase early in 1763, for we find mention in the summer of that year (Digby to Ilchester, June 21) of the loan of his "new house in Piccadilly" to the French Ambassador. The elevation of a richly ornamented screen, on the street front, by Robert Adam, in Sir John Soane's Museum, and Sir William Chambers's copy of the same architect's pretentious ground-plan for the outer court and dwelling-house, testify to the magnificence of Holland's ideas at this time. Adam was probably recommended to him by Bute or Shelburne, but his designs were never put into execution. Chambers's subsequent development followed his lines, but on a far smaller scale.

² C. J. Fox to G. Selwyn, January 6, 1768 (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, ii. 234).

³ Holland to Ilchester, March 9.

Lord Irnham, may have proved a further inducement to Holland to espouse his cause so openly. But his dislike of Wilkes, and his natural predisposition to uphold the rights of Parliament against the public, are sufficient to explain his unexpected return to the footlights. Naturally he took no personal part in the contest, but his sons were prominent—perhaps too prominent for their candidate's chance of success—in private and on his platform. The hustings were at Brentford, and on the day of the poll, Luttrell had perforce to avoid the mob assembled before his father's house, by breaking down the garden wall and stealing down unobserved by back lanes. A sumptuous breakfast prepared for him and his followers at Holland House was left untouched. Wagers had been freely laid that the contest would cost him his life ; but, in the event, the proceedings passed off without serious disorder. Wilkes had his mob well in hand, and had issued instructions that, although he encouraged intimidation by peaceful means, he would not tolerate rioting. He received 1,143 votes to the 296 given to his opponent.

We have Holland's own account of the incidents at the poll, which was only the prologue to further scenes in the House of Commons.¹

“ On Thursday, Mr Wilkes stood at Brentford, nominated by Mr Sawbridge, and seconded by Lord Shelburne's young Townshend in a speech that I believe you would think reasonable. They had both been in the House, when, without a division, Mr Wilkes was declar'd incapable of being elected. Yet they propos'd him. I think they should have been expell'd ; but as I don't know the motives for not doing it, I am not a judge. Mr Luttrell was named by Mr Dodd, seconded by my son Ste. Mr Luttrell was not supported as he had reason to expect. Great pains, indeed, were taken to intimidate, and with too much effect.

“ When it came to the House, Mr Dowdswell, &c.,

¹ Holland to J. Campbell, April 18, 1769.

oppos'd sending for the return, or proceeding 'till a petition should be presented. Then my son Charles spoke. The division was 207 against 115, and on Saturday the motion was, that Mr Luttrell ought to have been return'd. The division was 197 to 143, and the return was amended. It was a very long and fine debate. The Attorney-General spoke excessively well, and with great spirit, so did Thurlow, Jenkinson, Dyson, Sr F. Norton, most convincingly to the question, but no farther. Mr Grenville, who was in the minority, spoke better than ever he did before, in the opinion of every body but my son Charles."

Thus, notwithstanding his ignominious defeat, Luttrell was forced upon the unwilling constituency by the vote of the Commons; and the brothers had continued to champion his cause. Ste. described Wilkes's supporters as "the scum of the people"; and Charles was equally outspoken.¹ A last effort was made by the electors to assert their rights in Parliament. They petitioned against this flagrant abuse of their privileges, and the hearing was fixed for May 8. The debate, in which both young men again took part, lasted till two in the morning. Luttrell's seat was confirmed by 221 to 152. Holland wrote:

"I am told (and I willingly believe it) Charles Fox spoke extremely well. It was all offhand, all argumentative, in reply to Mr Burke and Mr Wedderburn, and excessively well indeed. I hear it spoke of by everybody as a most extraordinary thing, and am, you see, not a little pleased with it. My son Ste. spoke too (as they say he always do's), very short, and to the purpose. They neither of them aim at oratory, make apologies or speak of themselves, but go directly to the purpose, so I do not doubt they will continue speakers. But I am told Charles can never make a better speech than Ste. did on Monday."²

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, iii. 359. Also, Holland to J. Campbell, April 18: "I am told that few in Parliament ever spoke better than Charles did on Friday. Offhand, with rapidity, with spirit, and such knowledge of what he was talking of, as surpriz'd everybody in so young a man."

² Holland to J. Campbell, May 11, 1769.

Up to this point Holland had no reason to regret his re-entry into the field of politics. On personal grounds he welcomed Wilkes's downfall, and was gratified that his sons had contributed to the victory of the Ministry which he had pledged them to support. He felt proud that they had won their spurs at the first attempt, and that their prowess had been universally recognised. The fact that their initial success had been gained in an unworthy cause did not disturb him. He did not look upon it in that way. We find him writing to John Campbell from Lyons, on April 20, 1768: "I see in a very serious light Mr Wilkes's *triumph* over religion, law, majesty and liberty; and liberty destroy'd under the name and pretence of liberty."

This line of thought, which to our ideas would appear perverted, was in reality the natural result of his early training. His political education had taught him to disregard the feelings of the people. He had accustomed himself to look down upon their opinions and to scorn their judgment. His point of view was circumscribed; and his weakening intellect, sapped by the weight of years, was unfit to assimilate newer and broader views. He maintained that Parliament was the axis around which all else revolved; and insisted that the plenary powers of the Commons must be safeguarded at all cost. It is not difficult, therefore, to understand the trend of Holland's sympathies in the Wilkes episode; and in the succeeding chapters of the drama his thoughts were faithfully reproduced in the irresponsible torrent of words with which Charles Fox was wont to amaze the House during his first few years in that assembly. "The business of the people," the latter exclaimed on one notable occasion, "is to choose us. It is ours to maintain the independence of Parliament. Whether that independence is attacked by the people, or by the Crown, is a matter of little importance."¹ And even as late as 1782,

¹ Trevelyan's *Early History of C. J. Fox* (ed. 1899), p. 367.

when saner counsels than those of the days when he sat beside North on the Treasury bench had prevailed, he still upheld the principle of Wilkes's expulsion from the House. It was "a privilege too valuable to be given up."¹

But before the summer was half over, Holland began to rue the day when he emerged from his retirement. A series of petitions had been forwarded to the King from various corporate bodies enumerating their grievances. Foremost among them was one from the Livery of the City of London. In it reference was made to honours conferred, in lieu of punishment, on a Paymaster, "the public defaulter of unaccounted millions." Holland rightly interpreted this as an attack upon himself, and wrote to the Lord Mayor, Samuel Turner, asking for an explanation. The latter prevaricated. He declined to accept personal responsibility for the contents of a document, of which he professed himself to be only the bearer; although, as Holland pointed out, he had associated himself with it by his speech to the King in delivering the petition.² In his letter, Holland had called Alderman Beckford, the Lord Mayor designate, as witness to the falsity of the accusation. But Beckford refused to support his former friend; indeed, it is possible that the attack originated with him. He acknowledged that he had received a paper setting out Holland's case, but maintained that he was not convinced by it that all he had heard was false.

Holland therefore took steps to publish his memorial in the *Public Advertiser*. It was answered by an anonymous pamphlet entitled, *The Fox Unkennelled*, in which his explanations were mangled and discredited. But

¹ Bleackley's *Life of Wilkes*, p. 317.

² The correspondence is printed, with Holland's *Justification*, in Woodfall's *Junius*, i. 174, etc. It is interesting to note the gentleness with which Woodfall's anonymous correspondent, "C.," treats Lord Holland. "I wish Lord Holland may acquit himself with honour. If his cause be good, he should at once have published that account, to which he refers in his letter to the Mayor" (July 21, 1769).

there was much to be said on his side. Even Walpole, who was never loath to strike an insidious blow at his friend's reputation, treated the accusations against him as absurd. The violence of the Corporation's petition was much blamed. The authors had not even the courage to sign or date it. And though, a few months later, when Holland had hurried abroad to join his wife at the bedside of her dying sister, the Livery instructed their members to institute a parliamentary enquiry against him, and if necessary to proceed to an impeachment, their whole case fell through from sheer lack of material. "Their silence cleared him."¹

The outcry against Holland was largely the result of his unpopularity. He had nowhere exceeded his rights. The morality of his manipulation of the Pay Office funds might be called in question, but not the legality. To explain his position, we must again revert shortly to the peculiar conditions which then obtained in the department.

Up to 1759, it had been customary for Paymasters to apply to the Treasury every four months for a third part of the ordinary Supply for the whole year. Subsequent to that date, the money was not requisitioned until the time for the payment of the service in question was approaching. No notice, however, was taken of Paymasters' balances in hand; and the cash was paid to their own accounts as a matter of course, whether it was needed or not. This wasteful system did not even terminate when the Paymaster vacated his office. In certain cases his functions were not transferred to his successor. He, or his executors in the event of his death, remained responsible for various claims, warrants for contingencies, etc., voted during his term of office: also for fees for passing accounts, and gratuities to officers of the Pay Office. These he would meet by annual drawings on the Treasury, just as if he was still in occupation of the post.

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, iii. 390.

His liability only ceased when the Auditors of the Imprest had granted him a final discharge ; and in consequence his balances were allowed to remain open until he had received their certificate.

Holland, therefore, had every justification for accumulating large balances, and for retaining them after he had retired into private life. He was only following the usages of the office. Pitt alone of the Paymasters of that day had refused to turn public money to his own advantage. But the fact that the Paymaster submitted his own estimate of his requirements to the Treasury, and that his figures were accepted without scrutiny, gave spiteful tongues their opening. In Holland's case, this weak spot was further exemplified by the magnitude of the sums involved. No less than £45,900,000 was paid over to him or his executors, between the years 1757 and 1780 ; and in December 1765, £460,000 was the amount of his debt to the office. The annual interest on the money amounted to very substantial proportions ; and it is not unnatural that Holland's detractors should have insisted on the delivery of his public accounts with the least possible delay.

In 1769, Holland had been four years out of office. His figures for 1757, 1758 and 1759 were in the hands of the Auditors ; and those of 1760 were nearly ready for delivery. All things considered, his progress compared very favourably with the results obtained by his predecessors. Winnington only held office for two years and a half, yet his accounts were not declared until fourteen years after his death. Chatham's, for a period of nine years, took thirteen. Holland's accounts dealt with payments of £46,000,000 ; but were rendered within seven years of leaving office. Charles Townshend had only a turnover of £2,000,000, but his figures were not delivered for eleven years ; and Lord North's and Mr Cook's for the same amount, took twelve.

Besides, Holland had had to contend with special diffi-

culties. The earlier portion of his term had been served in time of war, when he was dependent on deputies for the pay of the army abroad. The adjustment of their accounts had proved a lengthy proceeding, and even, in two instances, led to actions in Chancery. The whole procedure of the office seemed specially created to cause delay. In some cases, too, the want of proper authority had postponed the settlement, for the Auditor would not allow a single shilling of their accounts until this was obtained. Many of the necessary documents were in the hands of the War department ; and Holland's constant entreaties to Welbore Ellis and other Secretaries-at-War to expedite matters must not be forgotten. The peculiar nature of his predicament was recognised by the Treasury. For when, in 1767, proceedings were instituted against him, and were issued from the Court of Exchequer directed to the Sheriffs of London for the non-production of his reckonings, a stay of process was granted him for six months, and was renewed for a further year in the month of May 1768.

The whole of his accounts were finally handed to the Auditors in January 1772, but were not declared closed until 1783, long after his death. The tardiness of the Audit Office was partly responsible for this delay, but their task was prolonged by the lawsuits between Holland's executors and his two sub-paymasters, to which allusion has already been made. In the meanwhile, his balances remained open ; and though he claimed in 1769 to have handed over a sum of £910,500, which was soon after supplemented by an additional £43,500, from the savings he had effected, to be used in aid of the public services, he does not appear to have made further efforts to meet his liabilities. At his death in 1774, his executor, John Powell, who was at that time chief accountant at the Pay Office,¹ continued to hold the capital sums, and did

¹ Powell became accountant to the Paymaster in 1765, and retained the post until appointed cashier in 1776.

not begin to reduce the debt to Government till 1778, when £200,000 was paid off.

In November 1780, a commission was appointed by Parliament to look into the whole question of public accounts. Their conclusions shed much light on the methods of government offices at the period, and for that reason are worthy of close study.¹ In their remarks upon the office in question the commissioners expressed disagreement with the theoretical necessity of keeping balances open for such long periods. In Holland's particular case, they considered that his accounts were not sufficiently forward to be settled for some time to come, and called on his executors to pay off the residue without delay. The latter asked leave to retain £73,000 in their hands, this being the amount at stake in the impending litigation; but their objections were overruled, and the whole was paid over to the Exchequer.²

It is interesting to note that in their deductions and recommendations the commissioners cast no aspersions on the conduct of those Paymasters, past and present, with whose accounts they were dealing. They held the system to blame, not the individual. They animadverted severely on the recognised procedure of the office; and stated that in their opinion claims preferred after a Paymaster had left office should be dealt with by his successor. By this means open balances would be reduced to a minimum. They objected strongly to the system of delaying subsequent accounts, because some former Paymaster's were not closed³; and spoke scath-

¹ The Reports were published in three volumes by W. Molleson, March 10, 1783. Reports IV and V, and their appendices, deal with the Pay Office.

² This settlement, amounting to some £250,000, was believed to be final. But when the accounts were declared in 1783, the Government claimed a further £116,000. The sum of £54,000 was at that time still owing to Lord Holland's estate by deputy-paymasters or their representatives.

³ "A dispute with a deputy stops Lord Holland's accounts; but this can be no reason for delaying one moment the accounts of his successors."

ingly of the dilatoriness both of the Pay Office and of the Auditors of the Imprest. In their recommendations, they suggested that future Paymasters should announce their balances to the Treasury every year when applying for supply, and that more money should not be issued at a time than the Treasury considered absolutely necessary.¹ Their final proposal, however, went to the root of the whole matter, and was sufficiently far-reaching, when adopted, to alter the whole character of the office. They advised that the cash should be taken from the Paymaster altogether and placed in the Bank of England. "Instead of being the banker of the army, he will be the instrument only through whom the army services are paid, without having the power of applying the public money to any other purpose whatever."

The year 1769 proved one of misfortune to Lady Holland. In February, Lady Sarah Bunbury left her husband and eloped with Lord William Gordon, taking with her her infant daughter. After three months, the remonstrances of her family brought her to her senses, and she returned to live for the next ten years under her brother's protection at Goodwood.

Next, her youngest sister, Cecilia, a pretty, delicate girl of nineteen, who had been ailing for some time past, developed a rapid consumption in Ireland, while staying for the summer with Lady Louisa Conolly. The invalid's one idea was to go abroad; and though the doctors gave no hope of her recovery, the Hollands decided to humour her fancy.² They arranged to leave England at a

¹ "If there exists in Government no power to compel a Paymaster to disclose his balances, and to deliver back to the public what their service does not require he should detain, it is time such a power was created."

² "I am not going abroad upon the account of my own health. But I am going, because Lady Holland's goodnature will not let her amiable sister, who is dying, go with only a servant. The worst of it is, there are no hopes, but it would be cruel to tell her so, and never was a more melancholy journey undertaken" (Holland to W. Earle, October 9, 1769).

moment's notice, in order to take her to the South of France. But her strength was insufficient to stand the journey, and she died in Paris on November 13.

Charles and Harry accompanied their parents to France. The former lost no time in renewing his acquaintance with those great ladies whose *salons* were the rendezvous of all the wittiest and the cleverest in Parisian society. As a boy, he had been made much of, on the occasion of his first visit to the French capital. Even then he had not been behindhand in making the most of his opportunities, for lack of self-confidence had never been his failing. But now that he had blossomed into a full-blown macaroni, he was as ready to bandy words with those literary celebrities who were accustomed to assemble beneath the hospitable roof of Madame du Deffand, as to hold his own with the wildest of Lauzun's associates at the "Club à l'anglaise."¹ But his experience was not to be too cheaply bought. Madame du Deffand never liked him, and took an ill-natured delight in recounting his misdemeanours to Horace Walpole.² "Il perd immensément au vingt et un, au trictrac et à toutes sortes de jeu," she wrote on one occasion. And on another, two days before he left for England: "There was play in my house till five in the morning. The Fox lost a hundred and fifty louis. I fancy this young man will not get off for his stay here under two or three thousand louis." He was acclaimed a high player among those who played highest. Money disappeared like sand through a sieve. Yet, on that occasion, his father never seems to have raised his voice in protest. In his eyes, his favourite son could do no wrong.

The first few weeks of the New Year were to add new laurels to Charles's growing reputation. On January 8,

¹ C. J. Fox to G. Selwyn, October 25; November 19, 1769 (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, ii. 398). These letters are wrongly dated 1770 in that work.

² *Lettres de Me du Deffand à H. Walpole* (Mrs Toynbee).

he reached London from Paris with Crauford and Harry Fox, and spoke on the address next day "with much applauded fire." Some weeks later the House took into consideration a motion of Mr Dowdeswell, to the effect that its procedure was governed by the ordinary law of the land. This, as was intended, raised the whole question of the relations between the House of Commons and the public; and Wedderburn, whose precision on questions of law was recognised by all, had laid down that no precedent for Wilkes's case could be produced. Charles followed him, and cut the ground from under his feet by citing a recent trial which was exactly analogous. "The House roared with applause."¹ His apt defence of the Government won him a Junior Lordship of the Admiralty in the new Administration which North formed after Grafton's resignation early in February.

Holland was overjoyed at the news of Charles's triumph. We can see him revelling in the great lawyer's discomfiture. He wrote to Campbell on March 4 :

"The very fine accounts of Charles that we have here have done Lady Holland great good. They have given me as much pleasure as I am capable of. But they cannot make me set much value on my life; or even prevent my being sorry every day that I cannot foresee, as I us'd to think I could, that it would soon end. Tho' my sons have, and indeed I believe they have, as much honesty and good nature as comes to any body's share, I think I am myself an example of how little use that may happen to be to them."

He was especially anxious to be informed of Charles's

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, iv. 62. Walpole speaks of this incident as occurring on January 25, 1770, the day after Charles came of age. Cavendish does not mention this debate at all, but reports a speech of Wedderburn upon exactly these lines on February 19. The latter authority is probably the more correct, as he wrote from notes taken in the House, whereas Walpole was no longer a member, and seldom entered its portals.

opinion of his own speaking.¹ And when the reply came that the young man thought he had spoken very ill on a certain occasion early in February, he wrote²:

"I do not mind that; and when he speaks so well, as to be, as Lady Mary says, the wonder of the age, it does not give me so much pleasure, as what you, very justly I think, tell me *de son cœur*. And yet that may not signify, for if I know myself, I have been honest and goodnatured, nor can I repent of it: though convinced now that honesty is not the best policy, and that goodnature does not meet with the return it ought to do."

The Hollands left Paris for Nice before the New Year. The journey proved even more arduous than it was wont to be; for their progress was everywhere delayed by deep snow and bad roads. Holland stood the strain well, and made good progress in the warmth and sunshine of the Mediterranean. The English had gathered that year at Nice in sufficient numbers to form a society of their own; but the Hollands' pleasure was marred by the absence of their children. "It's very uncomfortable," wrote Lady Holland, "to be so far from them. I hope in God it will never again be my lot, and that I shall return to England in May never to leave it again."³ But when the long winter was over, and the time came to take the road, their progress was again retarded. On this occasion the Archduchess Marie Antoinette was the innocent cause. Her arrival at the frontiers of France to meet her youthful bridegroom, threw everything out of gear. Her immense suite required every available posthorse; and until her followers were safely lodged at Versailles the ordinary traveller had little chance of continuing his journey. The Hollands were delayed some time at Lyons, and subsequently took care to avoid the capital. They met

¹ Holland to G. Selwyn, February 13, 1770 (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, ii. 376).

² *Ibid.*, March 31, 1770 (*ibid.*, ii. 378).

³ Lady Holland to R. Bateman, January 26, 1770.

Charles and Mr Storer at St Omer on June 1, and reached Kingsgate two days later.

Holland passed the summer at Holland House, and did not return to Kingsgate at all that year. He was well, but not as well as he was made out to be.

“ I have already told you how falsely the newspapers represent my health (as they always do everything that relates to me), such as my having been at the King’s levee, having conference with ministers, &c. I have not talk’d, nor am I able to talk of, any business. I have not seen any body but my own family and a few private acquaintance, nor been once out of the chair I sit in since I came. I told you, in my last, that I was free from pain. I can with pleasure say that I continue so. This is all I shall ever have to brag of, and I hope to God it will continue, for it is a great deal.”¹

Fortunately he never lacked company, for his drooping spirits were prone to revive under the influence of cheerful society ; and at times he would joke and laugh with the best. He would go out of his way to please the younger members of the party, and exerted a peculiar fascination over them. He was ever a delightful companion ; for no one knew better how to impart to others that fund of information which he possessed. His kindness to all was ably seconded by Lady Holland’s. Her simple tastes, her gentleness and her thoughtfulness for others, endeared her to all who surrounded her. Holland House never lacked visitors when the hosts were in residence.

The old man still shewed a languid interest in the events of the day. He took an almost unholy delight in Beckford’s death. He described him as the most ill-natured being that ever existed, and expressed his conviction that damnation would assuredly be his lot in the next world. He was amused and delighted with the

¹ Holland to J. Campbell, June 21, 1770. Walpole would have it that Holland was not so weak as he painted himself (*Memoirs*, iv. 160).

flights of imagination by which Chatham had embellished certain of his recent public utterances.

“ I never pretended to guess at Ld Chatham's intentions. I never comprehended him. But I did not expect that I should be at the same loss about his words. Yet I am assur'd (by several ear-witnesses of veracity) that in one speech in the House of Lords, he said, ‘ That the Livery of London was a most respectable part of the Constitution : older than the King, Lords and Commons. And that Androgeus was Lord Mayor of London when Julius Cæsar came here.’¹ Where did he find this ? And what could he mean by a Lord Mayor and Livery, where every body went stark naked ?

“ In another speech, he said, ‘ Your Lordships have all of you read Robertson's *Life of Charles the Vth*. It is a very proper book to read *under the shades of a tall oak tree*.’ For God's sake what could this mean ? And yet you may be assur'd that he said both these things. I find he appears to be as well in health as ever he was, and that his speaking, of which I was always a great admirer, meets with great applause.”²

Yet we miss that trenchant criticism of passing incidents, which used to be so marked a feature of his correspondence. For some years past Holland had had much difficulty in holding a pen, and was dependent on others for the writing of his letters.³ “ I don't get off my chair, nor have been since I came to England,” he wrote in February 1771 ; and grew very fat with this sedentary life. His vigorous constitution still held out against the assaults of time ; but it can be no matter for surprise to find that in his moments of depression he still felt that life had lasted all too long.

¹ Compare Walpole's *Memoirs*, iv. 122

² Holland to J. Campbell, June 21.

³ After 1765, Holland's letters are seldom in his own handwriting.

CHAPTER XXXII

OUR chief concern in the last four years of Holland's existence is centred in his sons ; for their adventures were the outward manifestation of their father's remaining interest in life. Charles's exploits during the period of his inclusion in the Government bear the stamp of the paternal influence. Holland's dream had been to bring up the boy to regard him in the light of an elder brother ; and never were father and son on more confidential terms than those two appeared in the spring of 1770. Holland's devotion was fully reciprocated. Charles had no secrets from his parent, and so marked had become the resemblance between them in manners and appearance, that the retailer of a House of Commons debate in 1771 was constrained to break off from his narrative to advertise the fact.¹

This likeness did not extend to their methods of public speaking. At his best moments, when he had warmed to his work, Holland could lay claim to a certain animation, and rapidity of utterance. But on all ordinary occasions he was plagued with a hesitation in his choice of words, which marred the smoothness of his delivery, and sometimes clouded the clearness of his argument. His superiority in debate was his one point of similarity with his son ; yet his speeches were more notable for their sterling sense than for any special brilliancy of language. Charles's powers of oratory, even in his early days, rose to a far higher plane. He was never at a loss for a word²—indeed

¹ *Parliamentary History*, xvi. 1345.

² "Pitt," said he, on one occasion, "is never at a loss for *the* word, and I am never at a loss for *a* word."

his difficulty was to select from the torrent which welled up to his lips. His powers of reasoning were astonishing ; but during the period of which we treat he was apt to allow his impetuosity to get the better of his head and to entangle him in a maze of contradiction. His flow of metaphor and quotation, his diction, the varied flights of his imagination and the diversity of his language, all combined to produce a degree of eloquence to which mankind has seldom attained.

Charles's divergence from the path which is usually trodden by the budding politician was most marked. His conduct was not calculated to endear him to the more sober of his countrymen. Even Lord North himself had reason to dread the outbursts of the *enfant terrible* whom he had taken under his wing. Always spoiling for a fight, at the first signs of trouble, whatever the subject, he was wont to hurl himself into the fray. He took pride in speaking on all occasions when the House was in session ; and blurted out his mind, without a thought of what the morrow would bring forth. Unprepared but undismayed, he would rush headlong into any controversy which chanced to arise, trusting to the inspiration of the moment to extricate him from the consequences of his rashness. And though on more than one occasion his powers of persuasion triumphed over the better judgment of the House of Commons, his victories more often than not proved barren and illusory.

Charles could at least claim the merit of consistency in the line which he adopted. He instituted himself the champion of the rights of the House of Commons against all comers. But forgetful of the fact that that assembly was in theory the representative of the British people, whom it was seeking to defy, he selected its most debased and 'indefensible institutions as the foundations of his case. Thus, his thesis in the Wilkes affair was, in plain English, a denial of the right of electors to choose their own member ; and not content with this extravagance, he

proceeded to cavil at Grenville's death-bed repentance—his bill to place the decision of election petitions under judicial control and to sweep away the injustices introduced into them by the party vote. He then set himself to obstruct the birth of the freedom of the press, by opposing the claims of the public to gain access to Parliamentary debates, and by inducing the House of Commons to reject an attempt to elucidate the intricacies of the laws of libel. But his efforts to impede the advance of enlightenment were unavailing; and the termination of the struggle saw the triumph of the popular party. Newspapers were enabled in future to publish free and unrestricted reports of the proceedings of both Houses, and the right of the individual to enter the precincts of the Palace of Westminster was no longer called in question.¹

If notoriety was the goal of Charles's heedless sallies in that inconsequent period of his career, he should have been well pleased with his efforts. His record for unpopularity has never been surpassed in so short a space of time. Two years sufficed to make him the best hated politician in the country; but, like his father before him, he gloried in the reproach. Revelling in the irresponsibility of youth, he could regard those scenes in the House of Commons, when he was on his legs at least once every evening, with unmitigated delight. He tasted power—the power of bending his audience to his will. Above all, the fact that his successes were so often momentary did not trouble him. He had little real concern for the doctrines which he so loudly proclaimed his own.

¹ A glance at the history of the last twenty years of the century will indicate the amazing metamorphosis which Charles's sentiments had undergone. He was as eager then to press on the emancipation of the masses as he had formerly been to trample on their rights. "To be in the wrong," wrote Trevelyan, "and side with the strong, on questions of civil liberty, was the easy and agreeable apprenticeship of one whose highest title to honour is, that on those same questions, from the first year of his discretion to the last of his life, he was almost always in the right, and hardly ever in a majority" (*Early Life of C. J. Fox*, p. 351).

To the significance of what he preached in those early days Charles gave no thought. He had as yet made but slight attempt to assimilate the jumble of fact and theory which he had imbibed from Holland's teachings and memories of the past. The old man made no secret that he was failing. He was utterly unfit to pose as the instructor of youth. Yet Charles was fired by his father's lamentations at the ingratitude of his fellow creatures, and schemed to pay off old scores on his behalf. His opportunity came, when the House of Commons joined issue with the City Corporation on the subject of printers' libels. In fact, the verbal chastisement which he administered to Lord Mayor Crosby and Alderman Oliver in the House came near to losing him his life; for he and his brother were dragged from their chariot and fared badly at the hands of the infuriated mob. But what cared Charles, if he *was* rolled in the gutter, and if his best suit *was* covered with mud? He certainly never lacked courage. "I would not have them afraid," Holland wrote to John Campbell; "but I would have them more cautious of a mob than they are. But calling them a mob is an offence, and some gentlemen in the House of Commons of great property were very angry that the people of England (the dirtiest blackguards, I am told, and lowest rabble you ever look'd at) should be so term'd."¹

Providence, however, was not content to allow such stupendous talents to waste themselves on thin air. Holland's methods of education had taught Charles to sow his wild oats in tropical profusion; so it was only just that one of his most cherished convictions should have been largely instrumental in leading the young man to the paths of sensibility.

Early in February 1772, Charles announced his intention of introducing a bill to amend the Marriage Act; in complete ignorance, apparently, of the fact that a Royal Marriage Bill was in course of preparation.² Holland

¹ April 2, 1771.

² Walpole's *Last Journals*, i. 6.

was said to have engineered the withdrawal of the Royal Family from the jurisdiction of Hardwicke's measure in 1753¹; and immediately Charles got wind of the import of the *King's Act*, as it soon came to be known, he, true to the family traditions, expressed his intention of resigning office rather than give the bill his vote. Lady Holland wrote:

"Ld North has treated both your brothers with much slight. They have not obtained of him the smallest favor they have asked for Salisbury people or others whom they have apply'd for, and Ste. says Ld Radnor has got things he has been refused. What has most hurt Charles was Ld North never acquainting him, nor sending to him at a meeting of Commoners that he had about this bill, or message from the King to both Houses about preventing Royal marriages against the King's consent. Ld North has always said Charles Fox was the only support he cd intirely depend on in the House of Commons; therefore not acquainting him with business that was to come there in a few days was a most unpardonable neglect. Charles advised only with his brother, and they agreed he should resign before this business of the Royal marriages come on in Parliament, as they both intended to be against it, as indeed most people are of their opinions."²

Nothing could have been more opportune and fortunate for Charles's future than the combination of circumstances which drove him to sever his connection with the Government. His breach with the court was his salvation; and henceforward he began to regard the world with saner eyes. The transformation was slow, it is true. It was not until after his father's death that Charles began to puzzle out the questions of principle which he had formerly taken on trust. Yet from that tender seedling grew up the mighty tree, whose branches bore justice and toleration and liberty for all mankind.

¹ Walpole's *Memoirs*, iv. 459. See *ante*, i. 185.

² Lady Holland to H. E. Fox, February 24, 1772.

We can put little faith in Walpole's statement that Holland instigated his son's resignation; indeed, Lady Holland's letter refutes the allegation. Horace refers specifically to the earldom, as one of the old man's causes for complaint. Holland, as a matter of fact, had made no attempt to press this point for many months past, though it was clearly not absent from his mind, from the effort which we shall find him making later in the year.¹ He had no reason to love the Ministry in power, but had revelled in his son's successes. He had never favoured opposition, and was filled with regret that Charles should think fit to cast aside so lightly his opportunities for further triumphs.

At the moment, however, the young man had plenty of scope for his energies. He stood up to the court with marked success during the debates on the Royal Marriage Bill, and developed the same happy knack of trampling on the lawyers, which had been his father's delight in days gone by.

He brought forward his own motion on the Marriage Act on April 7, having arrived that very morning from Newmarket, where he had managed to lose some thousands of pounds on the preceding day. North had given a promise not to oppose the introduction of the bill, but changed his mind to please the Yorkes. Notwithstanding the Minister's breach of faith, and a fine oration from Burke, Charles carried the day by one vote.² But mark

¹ *Last Journals*, i. 23. Walpole's second ground for Holland's dissatisfaction with the Minister—that he had refused him a place for the husband of his niece, Lady Susan O'Brien, is even more unlikely to have caused Charles's retirement. The O'Briens had returned from America in 1770, much against the wish of the whole family. It is true that the steps taken to find him an employment were fruitless. But Walpole's theory is contradicted by Lady Susan's frequent complaints, in after years, of the coldness of the Hollands towards them at this time, and especially of Charles's lack of interest in the fortunes of his favourite cousin.

² *Ibid.*, i. 83. Walpole was present in the House for the first time since he had resigned his seat, and gives an interesting account of this debate.

the amazing waywardness of the spoilt child ! He took no further trouble to follow up his victory ; and, on May 18, again posting from Newmarket, was just in time to see his bill thrown out undebated.

Nothing could have been more creditable than the conduct of the young politician after his resignation. He shewed no inclination to opposition, and with the exception of interference on that one act about which his feelings were so strong, he took little part, contrary to habit, in the debates of the House. Yet the apprehensions of North and his advisers were not allayed by the placid demeanour of their late colleague. They plotted to decoy him back to the fold by every means in their power. At the end of the year he had his choice of the Vice-Treasurership of Ireland, or a subordinate seat at the Treasury Board. The valuable sinecure he spurned ; the minor post he accepted. He looked not for salary—to him, alas ! only a modicum for one night's play, but for training to befit him to shine in his future career.

Holland did not overlook the unmistakable consternation in ministerial circles at his son's unexpected withdrawal, and thought to turn it to advantage. He wrote to North in the autumn, asking him to plead his case for an earldom with the King ; and also to Bute, imploring his aid and earnestly desiring to know " his faults " in 1765. " Do you remember," he urged, " you who never deceived me, when you told me if I asked anything for my children I should see the esteem the King had for me. I have seen no signs of it." ¹ Bute held out no hopes of assistance. " The sad event," he wrote, " of this fatal year ² has left me without a single friend near the Royal person." Nor was North's reply more reassuring. He had spoken, he said, to the King on two separate occasions. The answer was in each case the same, that, with the exception of two definite promises which must be

¹ August 1772.

² The death of the Princess of Wales.

fulfilled, the door was now shut, and for the present no more earldoms would be granted.¹

Charles returned to the Government in the same arrogant mood in which he left it. The very fact of holding office exerted an unfortunate influence over his manners and disposition. Carlisle had said jokingly that his friend thought that he ought to have been a Privy Councillor when he was at Eton.² Certainly his early promotion seemed to have turned his head. Yet at times symptoms of a more healthy spirit began to assert themselves. His vote against the Government on the Dissenters' Relief Bill was the result of growing convictions upon religious toleration, which clung to him throughout his career, and gained for him the lasting affection of the Methodist community. But this new independence of spirit was not lost on King George. He was unaccustomed to brook disobedience in his followers ; and discomposed by Charles's vagaries he remained ever on the look out to catch him tripping. He had not long to wait. Fox's intemperance upon the hackneyed question of printers' libels brought about a Government defeat, in the course of the case against Horne and Woodfall during the early months of 1774. Charles followed up this misdemeanour by a speech of unparalleled discourtesy to his chief, and thereby sealed his fate. The King insisted upon his immediate dismissal ; and North, much against his will, sent him word that his services were no longer required. From this final emancipation from court influence the commencement of Charles's responsible career may be said to date.

To Stephen Fox's incursions into the sphere of politics we have made scant allusion. His crisp and concise contributions to the debates of the House carried just sufficient weight to gladden his father's heart ; but, whatever the occasion, he had always to play second fiddle to his younger brother. Besides, he had acquired an un-

¹ North to Holland, August 22, 1772.

² *G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, iii. 52.

happy knack of making himself appear ridiculous ; and this, combined with a surprising rotundity of figure for one so young, prevented his contemporaries from taking him seriously. Carlisle wrote of the fire which burnt Winterslow to the ground, in the early days of 1774, as "the first misfortune that ever happened to Stephen, which he did not bring upon himself." ¹

This disaster put an end to a series of cheerful parties, which had graced the Foxs' Wiltshire residence from the very first days when they had made it their home. Ste. was popular and good-natured. He could at least boast of every quality that a model host should possess ; and his wife ably assisted his efforts to ensure their guests' comfort. His game, his hounds, his horses, were all at his friends' disposal ; and invitations to Winterslow were eagerly sought. A feature of those congenial gatherings was the entertainments in the little theatre which Ste. had added to the house. Both he and Charles had developed a cult for acting, and the last of the many plays which they produced only terminated a few short hours before that tragedy of a different nature, which so nearly cost Lady Mary her life.²

Unfortunately for himself and his family, Stephen never grew to realise the value of money. With a joint income of £6,000 a year, we find, little more than a year after his marriage, that he had negotiated a mortgage from his father for some £9,000. By Michaelmas, 1769, his indebtedness had grown to £22,000 ; and before Midsummer, 1773, had come the crash. The Foxley property, which Holland had made over to him at his marriage, was mortgaged up to its full value, for £49,000 ; and he was concerned in a further joint liability with Charles to their father of over £78,000.

¹ *G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, iii. 67.

² Lady Mary owed her escape from the burning house to the fact that her first thought was for her infant son. She rushed to the nursery, and avoided the flaming staircase, by which she would otherwise have attempted to descend,

For besides his extravagance in the country, Ste. had returned to his old passion—the gaming-table. Lady Holland was in despair.

“ You have played again, lost 3,000*£*, God knows how much more perhaps ; for after this what dependence can be had on your resolution. You will, you must inevitably be ruin’d. I’m hurt, I’m angry, and will trust myself to say no more. Your own feelings must suggest to you all mine ; but remember your promise. Let your name be scratch’d out of every club in London. . . . Oh ! Ste. What misery you bring on, and will do to all you love.” ¹

Ste. was his mother’s favourite, as Charles was his father’s. His peccadillos cut her to the quick. Henry, the Hollands’ “ only good son,” as Walpole termed him, had had the sense to avoid the pitfalls which were engulfing his brothers, and had refused to be dragged into the world of high play. But he was now a soldier, and was more often absent than at home. Consequently, he had little power to soften the bitterness of his parents’ last years.

In the earlier pages of this chapter we have recounted the contentment evinced by Holland at Charles’s performances in Parliament. Unfortunately there was another side to the picture. In his private life, the young man was proving himself thoroughly unsatisfactory. His taste for riotous living had become a byword. He was obsessed with a love of the card-table and the dice-box. He passed most of his leisure at Brooks’s and Almack’s, where high stakes were the fashion. White’s was another of his haunts. That fashionable meeting-place was divided at the time into the Old and the New Clubs ; and Charles had passed into the former, before he came of age, in as many months as some ordinary members would have taken years. After the delicate health which had been his portion in boyhood, it seems amazing what pranks

¹ Lady Holland to S. Fox (undated).

he could play with his constitution. Several of his best speeches were delivered after many consecutive hours of drinking and gambling. Fortune never favoured him. In three consecutive nights, in 1772, the brothers once lost £32,000. Indeed, his ill-luck was so continuous, that his friends were sometimes inclined to hint at sharp practices. But his want of success was not only conspicuous at cards. His horses at Newmarket never seemed quite to win ; his betting certainties seemed never quite to materialise. With all his shrewdness and talent in other walks of life, he appeared powerless to look after his own affairs.

Holland, as we have seen, for many years shut his eyes as far as possible to his favourite's shortcomings. " Never let Charles know how excessively he afflicts me," he wrote to Ste. in 1772.¹ But the reckoning, when it came, as come it had to, was disastrous. The crisis actually arose in the autumn of 1773, before the birth of Ste.'s son, whom Charles himself irreverently described as a second Messiah, because he was born for the destruction of the Jews.² But this event, on November 21, put an end to any hope, however faint, that a scandal could be averted. The change in Charles's expectations brought his creditors about his ears like a swarm of bees. He had granted annuities broadcast ; and he was constrained to face his financial position without delay.

Holland had little idea of the extent of his son's debts. His health varied greatly, and in the summers of 1772 and 1773 he was well enough to give balls at Holland House. Yet after the commencement of the latter year he began to break up fast, and his spirits were at so low an ebb that his relatives combined when possible to spare him disagreeable truths. The Hollands had sold their house in Piccadilly to Lord Melbourne, in the course of

¹ Holland to S. Fox, July 18, 1772.

² Gibbon's *Letters*, i. 198. " You have already among you had almost our all," wrote Lady Holland early in November 1773 to Ste.

1771 for £16,000; and spent their time between Holland House and Kingsgate. Macartney described his meeting with them both at Bath in December 1773:

"Lord Holland does not seem to be much altered, either in his looks or his health, since I saw him six months ago; only his appetite is rather less. His mind is weak and languid like his pulse, but at times appears to recover itself, and to be quiet and strong. His speech and memory are impaired, but I think his apprehension is perfect. Poor Lady Holland is a good deal changed; she is grown thin and looks ill. Her whole nervous system seems strongly affected; the least trifle alarms her, and in the midst of the most cheerful discourse she often bursts into an involuntary effusion of tears."¹

But now that the family honour was at stake, it was imperative, come what might, that Holland should be told the worst. He at once took counsel with his faithful friend Mr Powell, and proceeded to buy up Charles's annuities. None were forgotten.² Carlisle, Crewe and others of the young man's personal friends had gone security for him on occasion, and as Holland's public accounts with the Government were still unsettled, their

¹ Sir G. Macartney to G. Selwyn (*G. Selwyn and his Contemporaries*, iii. 49).

² He despatched the following instructions to Mr Powell (*Trevelyan's American Revolution*, i. 1):

"I do hereby order, direct and require you to sell and dispose of my long annuitys, and so much of my other stock, estates and effects, as will be sufficient to pay and discharge the debts of my son The Honble Charles James Fox, not exceeding the sum of one hundred thousand pounds. And I do hereby authorize and empower you to pay and discharge such debts to the amount aforesaid upon taking an assignment, not only of the judgment bonds and other securitys so to be paid and discharged, but also of all such bonds, judgments and other securitys, wherein any other person or persons is or are bound or concerned with or for my said son, to and for my own use and benefit.

"HOLLAND.

"Dated this 26th Novr, 1773.

"To JOHN POWELL, ESQR.,

at the Pay Office,"

bonds passed into his agents' hands. Complications were feared in the event of his death, which seemed near at hand, but all was satisfactorily arranged ; and though the contracting parties did not obtain their release till many years later, they were never called upon to pay a shilling. The whole of the debts, amounting to upwards of £100,000, were settled from Holland's estate.¹

The shock of these disclosures severely taxed the old man's failing strength.

" Ld H. is much the same ; better, I fear, I must never expect to see him. Oh ! Ste., this last attack, whatever it was, I'm confident has been owing to the disagreeable business he has of late been engaged in on your account. Ld Holland's ill state of health, I'm persuaded, is solely owing to the vexations of his mind, which have been too powerfull for a benevolent, friendly-feeling heart like his. Rigby, Calcraft, &c., &c., began ; the Duke of Leinster, Ld Hillsbro., Sarah greatly contributed ; and Charles and you have put the finishing stroke. How painful this idea must be to you I know. Charles does not yet feel it, but he will severely one day ; so he ought. And indeed, Ste., fondly as I once loved you both, I do not scruple distressing you by telling you how much you are in the wrong ; indeed, indeed you ought to feel it, and let it be deeply imprinted on your mind." *

Lady Holland herself was in even worse plight than her husband. She was dying of a cancer, and only her indomitable pluck had enabled her to bear up against the sufferings which she endured during the early months of 1774. But the end was not long delayed. Holland passed away peacefully on July 1, 1774. " My father," wrote the new lord to his younger brother, who was in America with his regiment at the time, " had so totally lost his faculties for the last three or four weeks, that he

¹ *Memorials and Corres. of C. J. Fox*, i. 92 ; Carlisle Papers, *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, xv. App. vi. 249, etc. ; Holland House MSS.

* Lady Holland to S. Fox (undated).

could not have had the least enjoyment of life, and I hope and believe he felt no pain, as he died perfectly easy." ¹ Perhaps he rallied at the last ; for we are told of a remark on his death-bed which is characteristic of brighter days. In reply to a card left by George Selwyn, he sent a message to the effect that if he was alive the next time he called, he would be delighted to see him, and if dead, he knew that Selwyn would be delighted to see him, alluding to his friend's well-known *penchant* for the sight of corpses.

Holland was laid to rest at Farley. Lady Holland only survived him by twenty-three days. "Take her all in all," was Lady Sarah's eulogistic comment on learning of her death, "we ne'er shall see her like again." ² But her death did not complete the family misfortunes. The new Lord Holland only lived a few months, and died of dropsy in November.

Henry, Lord Holland, bequeathed the whole of the residue of his personal estate to his wife, with power to dispose of it absolutely in any way that she should think fit. She, in her turn, left everything to be divided among her three sons ; with the express condition, that as Stephen and Charles had both owed large sums to their father, their respective debts to her estate should become their absolute property.

Their mother's gift enabled the young men to make a fresh start upon the money entailed on them or handed over during Holland's life-time. Their share of the residue of their mother's estate was probably an unimportant addition to their income. It is difficult to trace the exact cost of Stephen's and Charles's escapades ; but it would be no overstatement to write it down, in mortgages, in purchase of annuities and in presents, at £200,000. Holland's capital was thus largely depleted ; and when, in 1783, the question of the final payment of the Pay Office

¹ Holland to H. E. Fox, August 4, 1774.

² Lady S. Bunbury to Mary, Lady Holland, July 27, 1774.

accounts arose, much difficulty was found in producing funds sufficient to meet the demands. Holland, in later years, had given an interesting proof of his constant desire to aid his friends, by a habit of lending money to them at a reasonable rate—on a four per cent basis.¹ His yearly accounts are sufficient evidence to the little heed he gave to the security of these loans. The interest in many cases remained unpaid year after year ; and in 1773 he wrote off £34,891 as bad debts.² However, in 1783, certain recoverable capital was still outstanding ; and from this and other sources at their disposal, the trustees were able to make up the money required by the Treasury, without calling on Stephen's and Charles's debts to the estate, which might otherwise have been held liable.

We have little to add. Henry Fox inherited the coarser attributes of his father's personal appearance. The ample figure, the broad, open countenance, the deep forehead, the shaggy eyebrows, were all characteristic of the younger branch of the Fox family, as opposed to the slenderer build and more finely-cut lineaments of the elder line. In the case of Charles Fox, his swarthy and prominent brow has often been attributed to his royal descent ; but this feature is equally strongly marked in all representations which have come down to us of his father. In mentality, the resemblance is no less strongly indicated. Kindheartedness, generosity, geniality and courtesy were virtues common to Holland and his offspring in succeeding generations. The family good temper was their boast³ ; and his descendants had no lack of that power of enchant-

¹ Among the names of those who were thus beholden to him, we find, Sir F. Delaval, Lord Ferrers, Duke of Portland, Duke of Leinster, Thomas Conolly, Lord Oxford, Mr Harley, Edmund and William Burke, Lord Macartney, Charles Hamilton and George Selwyn.

² Arrears of interest in 1770 and 1771 amounted to £26,000 and £25,000 respectively.

³ " He had that temper which kind folks have been pleased to say belongs to our family," wrote the third Lord Holland many years later.

ment which he was wont, in conversation, to wield over his hearers. To sit by Charles Fox's side in after-years, and listen to his digressions into the realms of literature and philosophy mingled with the lighter topics of daily life, was a privilege highly valued by those who numbered themselves among his intimates. Nor was a similar gift of fascination lacking in his nephew, Henry Richard, Lord Holland, in the days when the social gatherings at Holland House had become famed throughout the land.

As a scholar, Holland would have taken no exalted place in an age of high classical proficiency. He had a useful smattering of the best-known authors; was favoured with an excellent memory; and was quick to make use of his acquirements. He loved reading for reading's sake, a hobby for which Sir Robert Walpole once commended him, confessing with sorrow that he had never sufficiently cultivated it.¹ He could boast of an excellent knowledge of generalities; was well versed in the English poets; and had studied the favourite writers of the period. His own verses had some merit, but were mostly conceived in a coarse though witty strain. For political writings and pamphlets, he seems to have depended on subordinates and hirelings. We can trace nothing of importance in the periodical publications of the day, which can be attributed to him. His only serious attempt at prose, the *Memoir* from which we have often quoted, does not shine as a literary composition. He had the reputation for a fondness for letter-writing; and voluminous folios of his correspondence give credit to the imputation.² Yet his style invites the suspicion that his heart was not really in his work. His terse, matter-of-fact methods on paper convey the impression that he rather used his pen as a means to an end than as an amusement for his leisure hours. His

¹ *Life of Shelburne*, i. 29.

² " You don't love writing so much as they say I do; so that your letter is a great obligation " (H. Fox to Ilchester, May 19, 1762).

letters are models of clearness ; and he had caught the knack of expressing himself in few words.

How far Holland considered art from the artistic sense of the word we have few means of judging. We have no record of his impressions of the monuments of past ages, and of the statuary and canvases with which his various travels must have brought him into contact. His love of bricks and mortar was very marked, but his taste in building seems to have inclined to the fantastic excrescences of Kingsgate cliffs, rather than to the more generally accepted orders of architecture. On more than one occasion he called in Robert Adam, but does not seem to have profited by his advice. His alterations have left no mark on the structure of Holland House ; but the plantations and arrangement of the grounds, which he planned with the help of Kent and Charles Hamilton, must have greatly improved the whole aspect of the estate. He was responsible, early in life, for many of the internal decorations at his brother's house, Redlynch ; and certain mantelpieces, which can be directly attributed to his influence, are models of proportion and good taste.¹ He had sufficient knowledge of the various standards of portraiture to pick out the rising artists and to employ only the best men. Reynolds was his favourite painter, but among others of note whom he commissioned to perpetuate his own features and those of his family were Hogarth, Allan Ramsay, Hoare, Vanloo and Echaradt.

In friendship, Holland displayed his best qualities. Frequent reference has already been made to the mutual adoration society which grew up around his fireside. " I am glad you mention my family," he wrote on one occasion to Charles Townshend. " Nobody has been more hated in the world, but I flatter myself nobody is more beloved in his own family than I am." ² His home life was an idyll to which few can hope to attain. Moreover,

¹ These are now at Melbury.

² Holland to C. Townshend, June 2, 1765.

the tenderness and affection of his own particular circle acted to some extent as balm to his injured feelings, when, from the exigencies of politics, his old associates one by one dropped away. Their defection was a severe blow to him. He saw his idols shattered ; and a reckless persuasion that every man's hand was against him goaded him to those excesses which have left an indelible stain on his fair name.

In early life, his power of winning friends was very remarkable. We may quote Henry Pelham's tribute at the time of Wilmington's death. " Dear Fox, yr warmth of head for your friends, I have ever seen and valued in you. It was that made me wish to be rank'd amongst them." ¹ Charm of manner, combined with great sweetness of expression and speech, were wont to produce an immediate impression on the newcomer, which the subsequent discovery of many sterling qualities seldom failed to substantiate. He was reliable to the core. No one who put faith in Holland's word had reason to repine. He looked on a promise as sacred.² Nor did he allow his solicitude for his followers to remain a negative quantity. He never forgot an absent friend, and no trouble was too great, if the question of promoting their interests was at stake. So marked was this trait in his character, that charges have been freely levelled against him of having overstepped the limits of propriety in the honours and

¹ H. Pelham to H. Fox, August 5, 1743.

² " Henry Fox warned those about him, never on any account to be guilty of a breach of a promise to children, as by so doing they instilled into them an indifference with regard to the observance of their own promises, when they arrived at the age of maturity " (*Jesse's Life of George III*, iv. 305).

His own rule was most strict on this point. Mrs Bellamy (*Life*, ii. 204) relates that on one occasion the wall at the bottom of the lawn at Holland House was to be blown up in order to replace it with iron palisades. Fox had promised Charles that he should witness the explosion ; but, as chance would have it, the workmen forgot to notify him when the work of destruction was to take place. The fond father at once gave orders that the wall should be rebuilt, in order that it might be blown up a second time, in his son's presence.

rewards which he obtained for his relations and intimates. It cannot be denied that at times he carried this propensity to excess. But may not a point be scored in his favour, that he was more often thinking of others than of himself? Even his insane pursuit of the earldom was prolonged to a time of life when success would have availed him little in person. Certainly his confidential correspondence with Ilchester, in which he makes no attempt to disguise his inmost thoughts, would lead us to suppose that on more than one occasion his chief disappointment at failing to obtain promotion was due to his annoyance at being unable to serve those whom he loved.

The feeling of confidence which Holland inspired was an all-important factor in his success as a parliamentary manager. His promise was inviolable, and men trusted him. He was straightforward, and, what was more, truthful. "I'll do him justice, I don't believe he ever did tell me a lie," said George II of him. "But if he did not," he added significantly, "he's the only man that ever came into my closet that did not."¹ In other respects his public record did not entitle him to the same esteem. Even his consistency of purpose did him much harm. So convinced was he that the pre-eminence of Parliament was the keystone of the state, that he was prepared to go any lengths to uphold it. He was unable to shake off the ascendancy of the Walpolean teachings, and continued to support those maxims unmindful of changing conditions and times. His code of morals was the code of a corrupt age. The honesty on which he prided himself was the honesty of his associates, though to our ideas it would not fulfil the full meaning of the word. His unreasoning contempt for the masses blinded him to his own faults. Public opinion would have swayed a weaker man. But with Holland

¹ Holland to J. Campbell, September 22, 1765. Holland's comment is worth recording. "I suppose," he wrote, "he lumped me with the rest always in his mind, and did not like me the better for it."

obloquy was an incentive to self-reliance. Popular abuse only increased his determination to go his own way. "His courage, his vehement temper," wrote Macaulay, "his contempt for appearances, led him to display much that others quite as unscrupulous as himself covered with a decent veil. He was the most unpopular statesman of his age, not because he sinned more than many of them, but because he canted less."

APPENDIX E

(See p. 55)

LORD WALDEGRAVE TO THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND

*Draft in the handwriting of Ld Waldegrave—no date, but
written in July 1757.*

SIR, I did not presume to write some weeks ago, because I was certain that in all material affairs yr R.H. had the most early & the best intelligence. . . .

From the moment that plan of Administration was formed, wherein it was the King's pleasure that I should be a part, to have been deterred by any personal doubts or difficulties would have been highly criminal as well as dishonourable. It was certain that in the execution of H.M.'s commands, we should do nothing for which we could be legally called to account, & we should have been cowards indeed had we apprehended any considerable dangers merely for having done our duty.

At the same time, I am very glad this plan was not carried into execution, because I was clear in my opinion it would not have answered H.M.'s expectations. Pitt and his friends had at that time entirely recovered their popularity. To our shame be it spoken, the D. of N. had at that time not only a majority in the House of Commons, but a majority even of the King's own servants, & what is almost incredible, some of them men of quality near his Majesty, who were under the greatest personal obligations.

Besides, it was unfortunately the general opinion, that this system could not last ; and consequently, it would not have met with support even from those who considered singly their immediate interest, any more than from those who looked further into futurity. The part the D. of N. has acted in all these transactions is perhaps without a parallel. However, he has been tolerably well imitated by his pupil, Ld Holdernesse. The latter indeed was of too little consequence

to hurt any body but himself ; and, as to the D. of N., he may soon find that when he overturned the King's plan, he at the same time put himself more than he was aware of in H.M.'s power ; for he has given so much strength to Pitt and his friends, that, unless he meets with favor in the closet, he must soon become as insignificant as many think he deserves. It is therefore most probable, that though underhand he will make great professions and promises at Leicester House, yet upon the whole, as far as he is able, he will endeavour to please the King and to atone for past offences.

As to Pitt, it seems still doubtful what part he will act, whether he will dare to resist faction, by doing what in his own judgment he must know to be right, or whether he will court false popularity by pursuing such measures as must in the end destroy the country. This will greatly depend on the treatment he meets with. Should the popular clamor and his Tory friends turn against him, he would certainly abuse them in his turn, and would probably do well. But, on the other hand, should he find himself quite desperate in the closet, his pride and resentment would make him do everything in his power to regain popularity by starving the war in Germany and throwing affairs into confusion at home.

Upon the whole, it seems most probable, that affairs may go on for some time in a kind of middle state ; on all sides there will be great mistrust and jealousy, but no open quarrel. Leicester House will never be quite satisfied, yet will not have spirit or pretence to appear quite angry. The D. of N. will endeavour to undermine Pitt at Leicester House, but will not succeed ; because they fear Pitt and do not fear his Grace. On the other hand, I should wish that Pitt would endeavour to undermine the D. of N. at St James's ; not that I have much concern at present which of them prevails, but whilst they are running a race for favour, the King would probably find both more tractable. And in that case, though too much time has been lost, and though it would be blindness not to see the dangers that surround us, yet whenever the strength of this country is properly exerted, with yr R.H. commanding H.M.'s forces, & properly supported, I can never think our affairs quite desperate. I really think these

gentlemen themselves are sensible of it ; that they also know that though their endeavours to mislead the people have succeeded in some particulars, yet in general the King is loved and respected ; that their own popularity is now of a very uncertain tenure ; & that Leicester House has no popularity to lose.

For this end, I very sincerely wish that the present Administration may continue ; and, if I may presume to say it, that H.M. may condescend to treat them better than they deserve ; for we are in such a situation, that nothing less than our whole united force can be sufficient ; and many will co-operate with these gentlemen to save the whole, who have no personal veneration for them. Whereas, on their side, they have given a very sufficient proof that they mean to overturn every thing, that they had rather their country was ruined than that any Administration should be formed of which themselves are not the most considerable part ; & it is our misfortune that at present they have the power as well as the inclination. However, on the other hand, though they have the power, they cannot be ignorant that a prudent use of it and a decent behaviour are the most probable means of preserving it, for there are still many who can give them a good deal of uneasiness, should they either neglect the King's affairs, or should they dare to misbehave towards H.M. in the manner they have formerly attempted.

As to the Duke of Dev., the D. of Bed., Mr Fox and others, who were to have formed a part of the late Administration, yr R.H. is so well informed of their behaviour, that I shall only say that if at last there was some difference of opinion, it is not to be wondered at, as some tempers are more sanguine than others ; but it was a very friendly difference, every one meaning the King's service, every one meaning well to each other.

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